CREATED BY LEIJI MATSUMOTO
BASED ON THE OPERA CYCLE BY RICHARD WAGNER

Der Ring des Nibelungen

THE RHINEGOLD



Leiji MATSUMOTO
松本零士



A manga series originally
inspired by
Der Ring Des Nibelungen,
an opera in four parts
composed by Richard Wagner
(1813 – 1883)

Volumes 1 – 8
translated and adapted
by Richard E. Mandel
from the French language version
released by Kana Press

Volumes 9 – 10
re-edited and adapted
by Richard E. Mandel
from the original English release
on the old Shinchosa web site
(www.shinchosa.co.jp)

Introduction by Richard Mandel

To my knowledge, this is the first time that anyone has attempted to bring Leiji Matsumoto's *Harlock Saga* manga series to English speaking audiences. It is certainly the largest and longest manga translation project I have ever undertaken myself.

This is a first draft of my personal translation that I have used in my various Leijiverse researches. It is based on the French language version published by Kana Press in 2002. A "reverse translation," if you will. I translated it using *Power Translator* computer software, then rewrote all of the pidgin English that the computer spit back out into something an English-speaking person could actually read, understand, and enjoy. As such, it is more of an adaptation than a translation, and not very accurate in more places than most of us might care for -- but it gets the job done. I hope it suffices until someone who can speak and read the native Japanese comes along to do a more accurate rendition. Someone had to be first in doing this, and it may as well have been me.

I have taken the liberty of "streamlining" my English adaptation for the sake of those readers not familiar with the Leijiverse in general and the mythos behind this story. Whole chapters of dialogue have been rewritten as a result, and a dozen or so graphic panels which I believe are incorrect have been altered or replaced with alternate ones. Hopefully these editorial changes on my part will help clear up some of the confusion experienced by earlier readers of this work, who got to experience it in the original Japanese. I apologize in advance for any errors or mistakes I might have made during this process.



The Rhinegold

Ring os - Loki's Interlude

IS THIS WHAT WE'VE SUNK TO? ARE THE GODS NO BETTER THAN OUR CHILDREN?

POOR FREYA ...

I'VE TRIED EVERYTHING I KNOW, BUT I CAN'T SHAKE US LOOSE!!

IT'S NO USE!

WE'RE GOING TO CRASH ON THE SMALLER OF THOSE TWO ARTIFICIAL WORLDS ... THE ONE THAT'S BLOWN IN HALF ...

ON ME? WHY?!

... AND THEY WILL PASS SENTENCE ON YOU.

WE WILL ARRIVE SOON AT THE HALLS OF ASGARD, WHERE THE GODS DWELL ...

ABOUT WHAT?

TADASHI, I MUST WARN YOU ...

BECAUSE OF THE PART YOU PLAYED IN THE REFORGING OF THE RING.

IT WASN'T MY FAULT!! YOUR DAMN BROTHER HAD A GUN TO MY HEAD!!!

TOCHIRO ...

THE SIGNAL! SOMETHING'S WRONG ... VERY WRONG. IF TOCHIRO HAD TO USE OUR PRIVATE SIGNAL, THEN ...!

WHERE ARE YOU, TOCHIRO? YOUR SIGNAL IS SO WEAK ... AS IF ... AS IF IT'S TRYING TO REACH ME FROM ANOTHER REALITY ... VALHALLA? DID YOU AND HARLOCK FIND VALHALLA?!

I'M COMING ... I'M COMING, EVEN IF I HAVE TO MOVE BOTH HEAVEN AND EARTH TO REACH YOU ...

BZZZZ

DON'T WORRY, TOCHIRO ... DON'T WORRY, HARLOCK.

... BUT THAT'S NEVER STOPPED US BEFORE.

BZZ

BZZ

MORTALS WERE NOT MEANT TO MESS IN THE AFFAIRS OF THE GODS ...

EMERALDAS ... WHAT IS IT? WHAT'S WRONG? YOU LOOK AS IF YOU'VE HARDLY SLEPT!

THANK YOU FOR COMING ... AND THANK YOU FOR HELPING WITH THE DAIBA BOY.

PERHAPS HE TRIED TO CALL YOU FROM VALHALLA ...

IT'S MY PENDANT, SISTER. TOCHIRO MADE IT FOR ME, AND HE WEARS ONE TOO. IF WE WERE EVER IN EXTEREME DANGER, AND THERE WAS NO OTHER WAY FOR US TO GET IN CONTACT WITH EACH OTHER, THE PENDANTS WOULD BE THERE ... BUT HIS SIGNAL IS SO WEAK ...!

... AND IT EXISTS IN A PLACE APART IN THE FABRIC OF SPACE AND TIME. IT'S A WONDER HE EVEN REACHED YOU AT ALL.

WOTAN MUST HAVE CALLED MIIME BACK TO VALHALLA ... AND WHEN HE DID, SINCE SHE WAS ON THE ARCADIA, HE DRAGGED HARLOCK'S SHIP OUT OF OUR UNIVERSE AND INTO THE PLACE WHERE VALHALLA EXISTS.

TOCHIRO MUST HAVE SENT THAT SIGNAL WHILE THE WAY WAS STILL OPEN ....

MAY I HITCH A RIDE WITH YOU TO MY SHIP? I HAVEN'T USED MY GALAXY RAILWAYS PASS IN QUITE SOME TIME, BUT IT SHOULD STILL BE GOOD ....

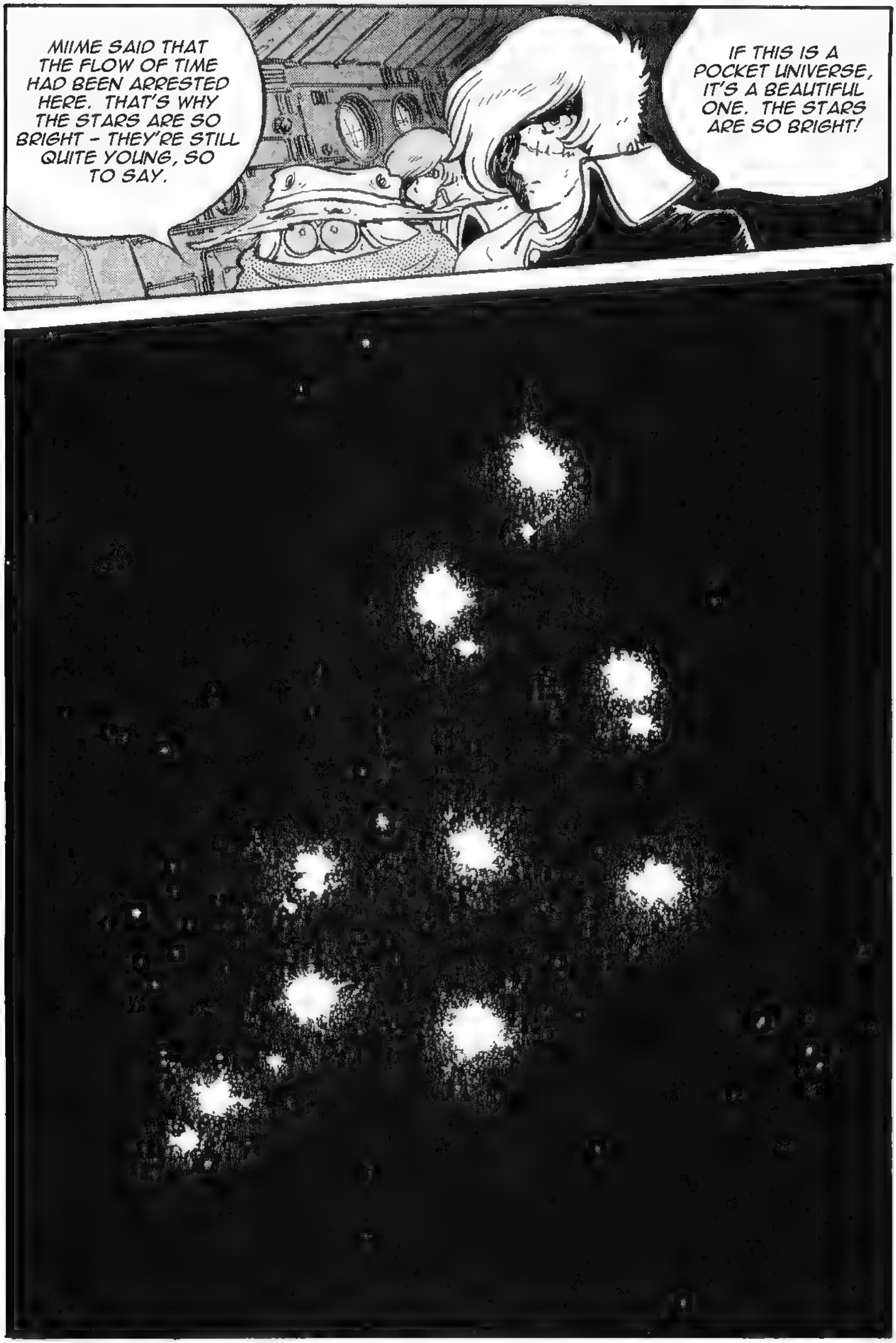
THEN THAT MEANS THERE'S A WAY I CAN FOLLOW THEM TO VALHALLA. ALL I HAVE TO DO IS FIND IT.



ARE YOU SURE YOU'RE GOING TO BE ALL RIGHT?

I'LL BE JUST FINE. THANKS, MAETEL ...

... THANKS FOR GOING OUT OF YOUR WAY FOR ME ....


MIIME SAID THAT THE FLOW OF TIME HAD BEEN ARRESTED HERE. THAT'S WHY THE STARS ARE SO BRIGHT - THEY'RE STILL QUITE YOUNG, SO TO SAY.
IF THIS IS A POCKET UNIVERSE, IT'S A BEAUTIFUL ONE. THE STARS ARE SO BRIGHT!

CLOSING FAST ON THE PLANET. YOU THINK SHE GOT YOUR SIGNAL?

NO WAY TO TELL.

EVEN IF SHE DID, AND SOMEHOW FOUND HER WAY IN HERE ...

... SHE'D NEVER REACH US IN TIME.

ALBERICH ... WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO THINK? WHAT WOULD YOU HAVE ME SAY?

TELL ME, LOKI -- YOU, THE ETERNAL TRICKSTER, THE EXPERT ON FIRE AND FLAMES BOTH NATURAL AND UNNATURAL ... WHAT DO YOU MAKE OF THIS RING?

IT'S NOT GOING TO BE THAT EASY, EVEN WITH THE POWER OF THE RING AT YOUR DISPOSAL. YOU SEE BUT ONE PATH AND FOCUS ON IT. WOTAN SEES THEM ALL, AND CAN CHOOSE WHICH OF THEM TO LEAD YOU ALONG ...

"OH, LORD ALBERICH, LORD OVER WOTAN, AND NEW LORD OF VALHALLA!"

... AND THERE'S THE RING, TOO. HAVE YOU NOTICED IT'S TURNED RED?

IT'S THE NATURE OF THE RHINEGOLD. IT REFLECTS THE NATURE OF ITS BEARER, BE HE GOOD OR EVIL. IT SEES YOUR HEART, AND THE BLOOD YOU WOULD SPILL. THAT IS WHY IT IS RED.

"RED GOLD," YOU MIGHT SAY. A RED RING FOR A HAND SOON TO BE SOAKED IN THE BLOOD OF HIS ENEMIES.

NOT UNLESS YOU REFORGE IT, ALBERICH.

WILL IT EVER SHINE GOLDEN AGAIN?

"ONLY COSMETIC," YOU SAY ...

THIS WON'T AFFECT THE POWER OF THE RHINEGOLD, MIND YOU. IT'S ONLY COSMETIC.

IT WOULD STILL BECOME TARNISHED WITH YOUR THOUGHTS AND CHANGE ITS COLOR TO REFLECT THEM.

EVEN IF YOU WERE TO DO THAT -- AND I KNOW YOU WON'T, BUT IF YOU WERE ...

A FUTILE EXERCISE.

UHH, YEAH. SURE.

I LIKE THE WAY IT MAKES THE EMBOSSED SKULL LOOK ... THE EYES IN PARTICULAR ....

... STILL ... I MUST ADMIT I COULD LEARN TO LIKE IT LIKE THIS.

PERHAPS LATER, ONCE VALHALLA FALLS AND I NO LONGER NEED THE RING ... PERHAPS THEN, WE MIGHT PUT IT BACK IN THE FIRE, AND CLEANSE IT OF MY BLOOD. UNTIL THEN, HOWEVER ....

BESIDES ... I COULD CARE LESS ABOUT THE COLOR OF THE RING, SO LONG AS IT GIVES ME THE POWER TO OVERTHROW WOTAN!

... AND THE WORKMANSHIP'S NONE TO SHABBY EITHER. NIBELHEIM'S NOT A BAD PLACE ... FOR A BUNCH OF DWARV--

--I MEAN, THE HONORABLE PEOPLE OF THE NIBELUN--

WELL, ANYWAY ... LOOKS LIKE YOU AND YOUR PEOPLE HAVE BEEN BUSY. THAT FLEET WOULD HAVE EVEN DONE OLD WOTAN PROUD, BACK IN THE DAY ...

THE NIBELUNGEN ARE VICTIMS OF WOTAN! HE MADE OUR MEN LIKE THIS TO PUNISH US!! DON'T YOU EVER DARE TO CALL US DWARVES AGAIN!!! IS THAT CLEAR?!!

WATCH YOUR MOUTH, LOKI!!

WELL, EXCUSE ME ...!

WHATEVER YOU SAY.

IF YOU'RE DONE NOW, YOU CAN LEAVE.

OH, NO -- THAT'S OKAY, ALBERICH! I'M LEAVING, I'M LEAVING!!

PERHAPS I SHOULD USE THE RING TO DO SOMETHING PARTICULARLY NASTY TO YOU .. LIKE YOU DID TO BALDER--?

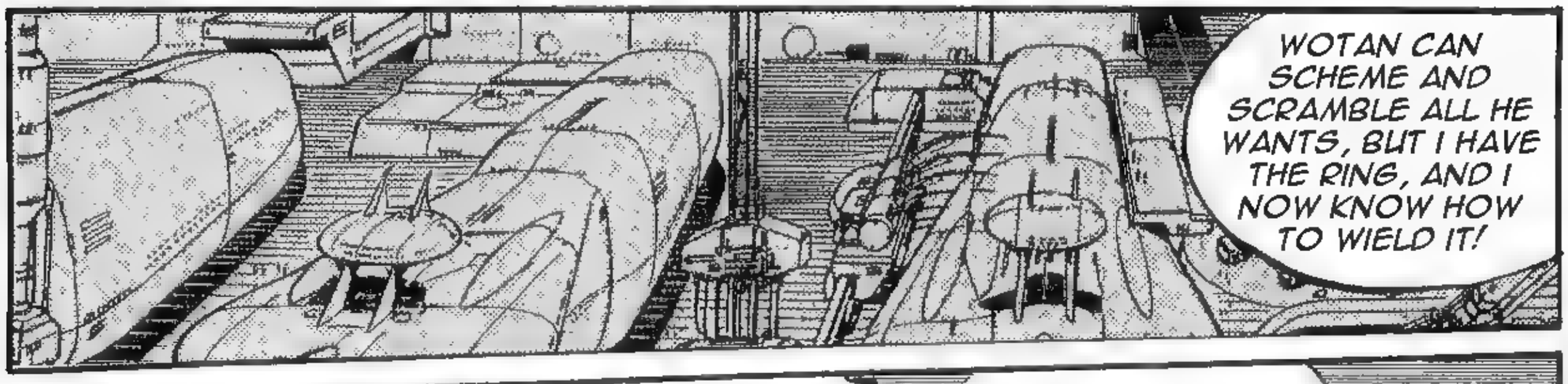
YOU CAN ROUND UP ALL OF THESE TOY SPACESHIPS YOU WANT, BUT ONLY THE RING HAS ANY CHANCE OF DEFEATING WOTAN.

BEFORE I GO, THOUGH, A FINAL PIECE OF ADVICE FROM ONE OF THE GODS -- WELL, A FALLEN ONE, ANYWAY ...

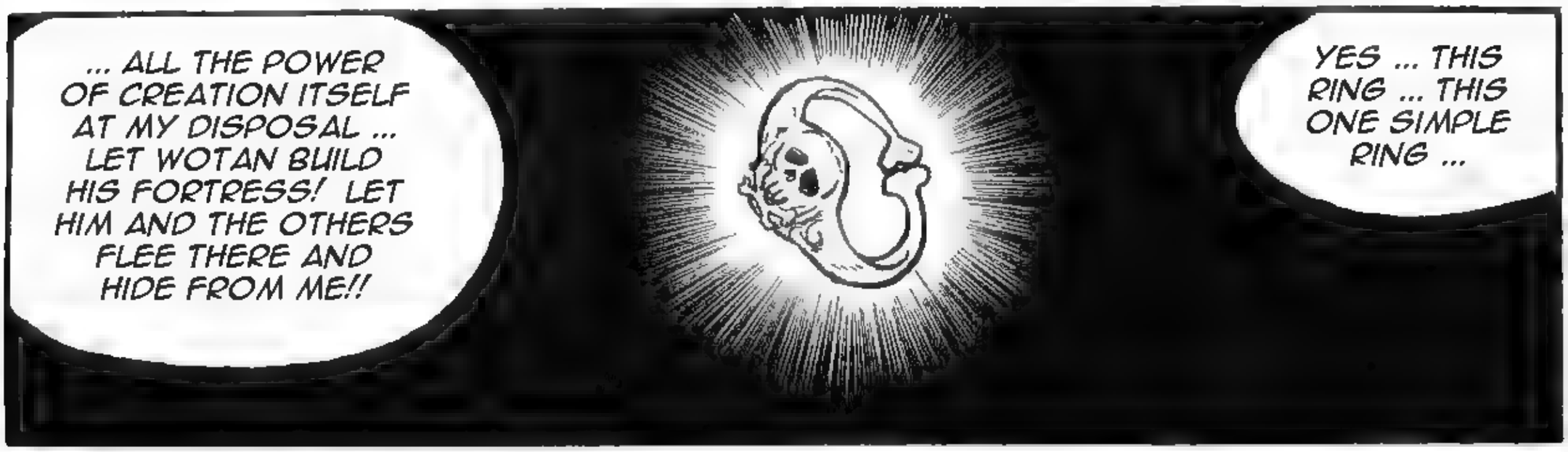
... AND A LITTLE BIRD FROM VALHALLA HAS TOLD ME THAT WOTAN IS HAVE THE CHIEF ARTIFICERS OF THE GIANTS OF RISENHEIM, FASOLT AND FAFNER. BUILD HIM A NEW SPACE FORTRESS ...

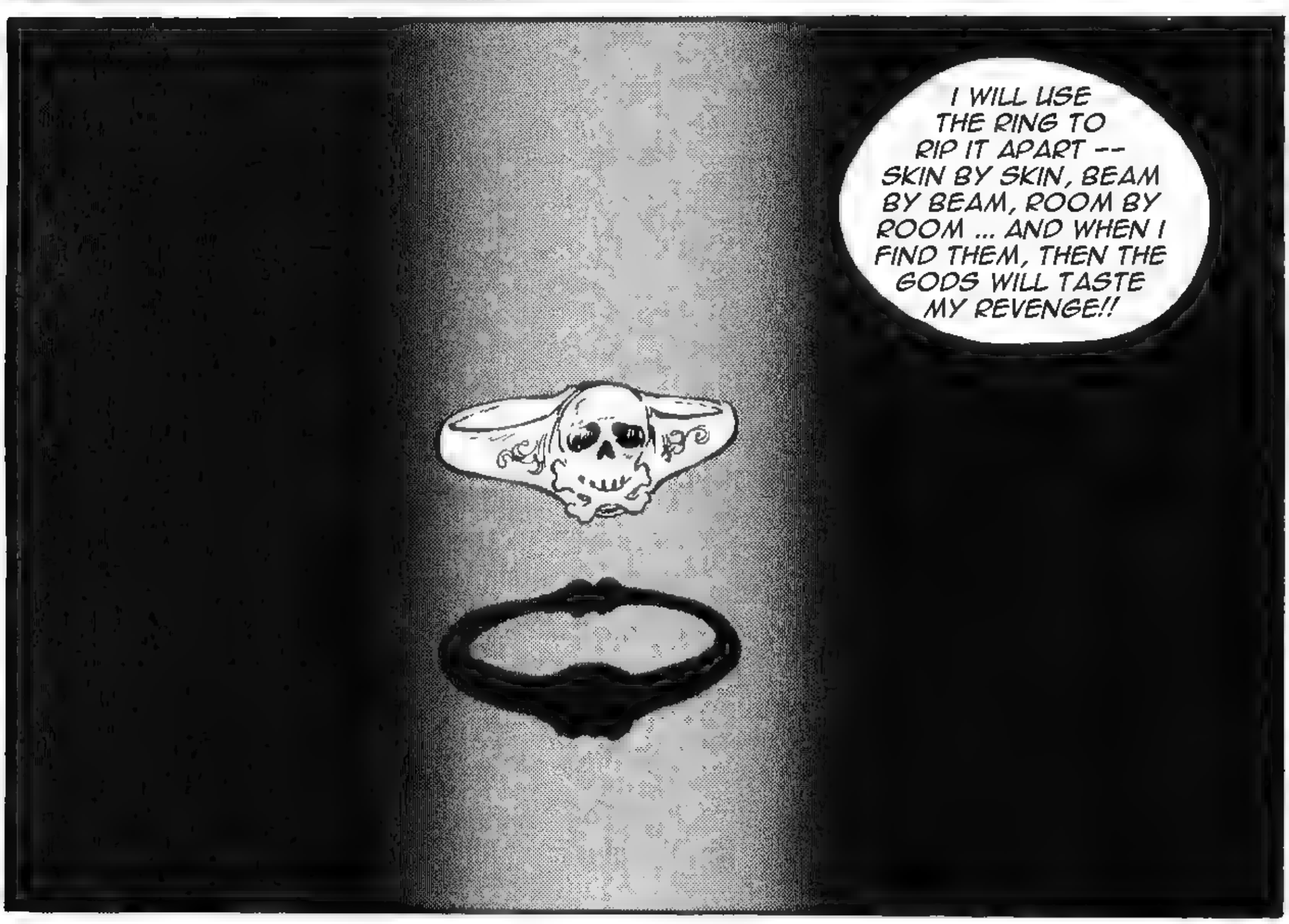
... THAT NOT EVEN THE RING IS SUPPOSED TO BE ABLE TO TOUCH. HOW ARE YOU GOING TO DEAL WITH THAT ... "LORD ALBERICH?"

SEEING IS BELIEVING.


WOTAN CAN SCHEME AND SCRAMBLE ALL HE WANTS, BUT I HAVE THE RING, AND I NOW KNOW HOW TO WIELD IT!


"TOY SHIPS," YOU CALLED THEM? NOT WHEN I ENHANCE THEIR FIREPOWER WITH THE POWER OF THE RING!!


... ALL THE POWER OF CREATION ITSELF AT MY DISPOSAL ... LET WOTAN BUILD HIS FORTRESS! LET HIM AND THE OTHERS FLEE THERE AND HIDE FROM ME!!
YES ... THIS RING ... THIS ONE SIMPLE RING ...


I WILL USE THE RING TO RIP IT APART -- SKIN BY SKIN, BEAM BY BEAM, ROOM BY ROOM ... AND WHEN I FIND THEM, THEN THE GODS WILL TASTE MY REVENGE!!

YOU'RE FREAKIN' SERIOUS ...

WE'LL DEPART AS SOON AS THE LAST SHIP IN THE FLEET IS FITTED, ARMED, AND READY!

SOMETIMES YOU DON'T KNOW WHEN TO QUIT, LOKI.

I'LL ASSUME THAT WAS MEANT TO BE FUNNY. OTHERWISE, I MIGHT HAVE TO CARRY OUT MY THREAT OF A FEW MINUTES AGO ...

YEAH ... RIGHT ...

AT LAST FREYA HAS BEEN GIVEN A LONG-DESERVED RESPITE FROM HER SELF-INFLICTED HELL ... BUT WHY NOW? WHAT IS WOTAN UP TO? DOESN'T HE KNOW THAT TIME WILL FLOW EVEN FASTER NOW?

SPEAKING OF WHICH, HAVE YOU NOTICED? THE COSMIC ORGAN OF VALHALLA HAS STOPPED PLAYING ...

DON'T KNOW.

PREPARE FOR IMMEDIATE DEPARTURE! DESTINATION, VALHALLA!!

ALL SHIPS, THIS IS ALBERICH!


NO MATTER ... LET
TODAY MARK THE
DAWN OF A NEW AGE
IN VALHALLA ... THE
AGE OF ALBERICH!

HERE WE ARE, ON VALHALLA, IN THE CENTER OF ALL OF SPACE AND TIME ...

... AND MOVES AT TOP SPEED TO THE CLOSEST POINT WHERE THE RING CAN BE USED TO OPEN A PORTAL HERE. THAT MEANS WE STILL HAVE TIME ....

... AND OVER HERE IN THIS UNIVERSE IS THE DARK VOID INTO WHICH I LONG AGO BANISHED THE NIBELUNGEN. WE HAVE WORD THAT ALBERICH'S FLEET HAS LEFT NIBELHEIM ...

THAT MAY PROVE DIFFICULT. THEIR KIND HAS BEEN TAUGHT BY THE NIBELUNGEN, AND THAT SHIP OF THEIRS SHOWS IT. ALSO, TIME NOW FLOWS NORMALLY IN VALHALLA ... AND THAT FAVORS THEM.

BUT WHAT ABOUT THE HUMAN SHIP THAT BROUGHT MIIME TO US? CAN'T YOU DEAL WITH IT BEFORE ALBERICH AND HIS FLEET ARRIVE?

... AND ARE ALSO LEARNING HOW TO WARP TIME AS WELL. THEY CAN ALREADY TRAVERSE GALAXIES IN FAR SHORTER TIME THAN SHOULD BE POSSIBLE FOR MORTALS!

WHILE WE SLEPT, THEY HAVE LEARNED THE SECRETS OF WARPING SPACE ...

THEY HAVE HAD HELP FROM THE NIBELUNGEN, THE ELDEST OF OUR CHILDREN. THEY HAVE BEEN TAUGHT BY THEM. THEY HAVE FOUND MANY OF THEIR ARTIFACTS, AND LEARNED THEIR SECRETS ...!!

HUMANS CAN TRAVEL TO THEIR NEAREST GALAXY IN ONLY A YEAR, WHEN BY ALL THE NATURAL LAWS SUCH A TRIP SHOULD TAKE MILLIONS!

EVEN WHEN I DESTROYED THEIR FIRST WORLD, THEY CONTINUED TO REBEL!!

WHY DID THOSE REBELS PERSIST IN THIS?! WHY DID THEY DEFY ME, AND GIVE THE POWERS OF THE GODS TO MORTALS?!!

MIIME IS THE CHIEF GUILTY PARTY THERE. YOU CAN DEAL WITH HER SOON ENOUGH.

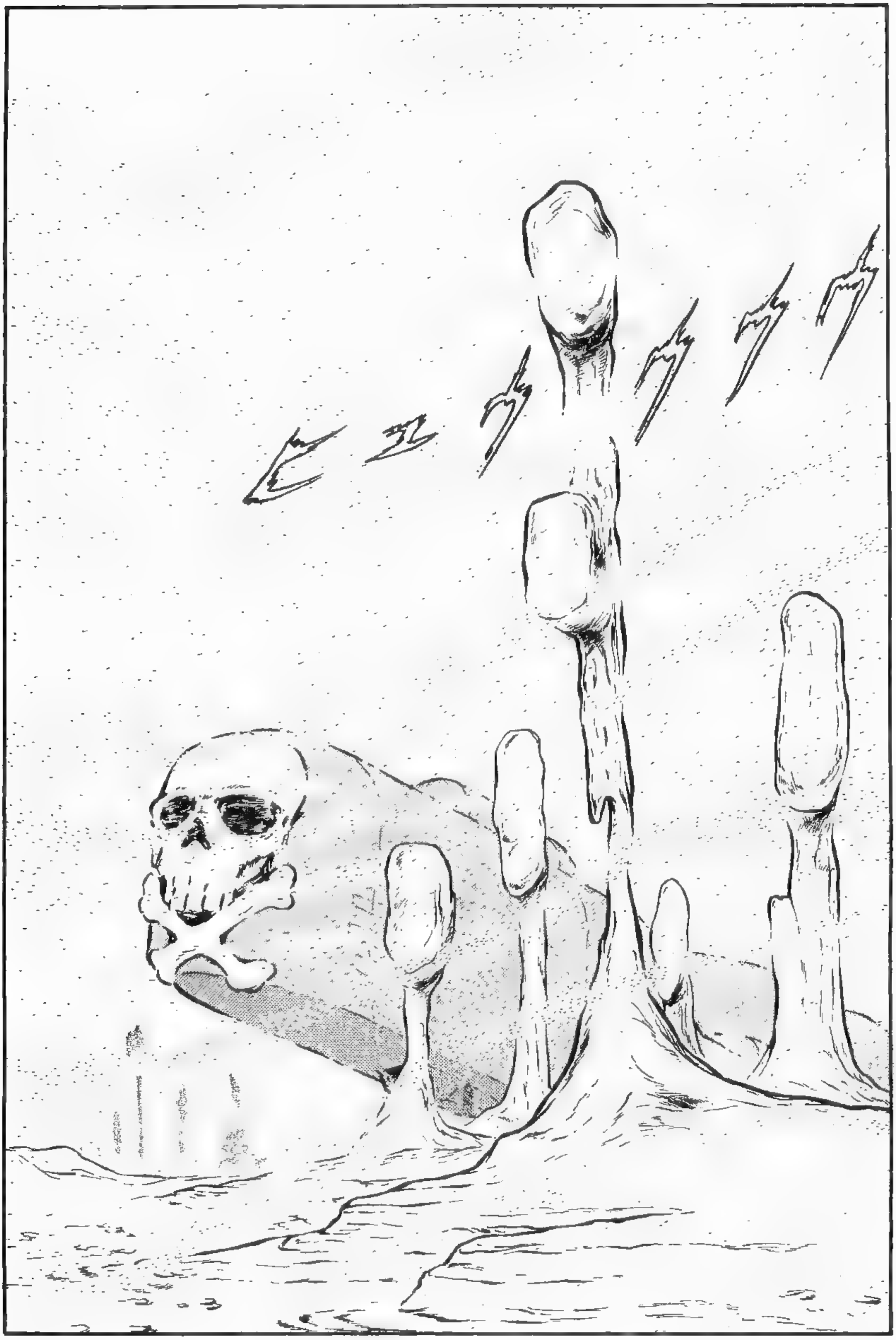
I SHOULD HAVE DESTROYED THEM THE FIRST TIME!!!

IT LOOKS LIKE THE HUMAN SHIP WILL BE FORCED TO LAND ON THE EQUATOR OF VALHALLA ... IN THE BACK HALF OF THE SEVENTH CIRCLE. NOT FAR FROM FREYA, IN FACT.

NOT FAR FROM FREYA?

MAYBE THEY CAN TREAT HER FOR US. IT'LL SAVE US THE TROUBLE, AND KEEP THEM BUSY FOR A WHILE. PERHAPS THE GARDENS CAN TAKE CARE OF THEM FOR US.

PERHAPS ....



IT'S A GOOD THING WE CRASHED INTO ALL OF THIS VEGITATION. IF IT HADN'T CUSHIONED OUR FALL, WE AND THE ARCADIA WOULD BE SPREAD ALL OVER THE LANDSCAPE. SPEAKING OF WHICH, I'VE NEVER SEEN PLANTS LIKE THESE BEFORE ....

THAT'S BECAUSE YOU'VE NEVER BEEN ON A PLANET LIKE THIS BEFORE.

VERY FUNNY, HARLOCK.



The Rhinegold

Ring 09 - The Gardens of Valhalla


SOMEONE IS COMING!!

I WONDER WHAT IT WAS HE SAW IN THEM ....

I STILL CAN'T BELIEVE THAT IDIOT ALBERICH WENT AFTER THE RHINEGOLD!

IF YOU WANT MY OPINION, I THINK HE WAS MORE INTERESTED IN THE RHINEMAIDENS THAN THE RHINEGOLD!

KNOCK IT OFF -- WILL YOU, GIRLS?

LOOKS LIKE WE'VE GOT A VISITOR.

WELL ... LOOK WHAT THE CAT DRAGGED IN!

AND WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN ALL THIS TIME, PRAY TELL? OUT CHASING RHINEMAIDENS?

HAVE YOU HAD ENOUGH OF PASSING FANCIES? ARE YOU READY TO COME BACK TO SOME REAL WOMEN?

MAYBE WE SHOULD THROW HIM BACK. AFTER ALL, IT'S BEEN OVER 100 YEARS SINCE HE'S LAST PAID US A VISIT. 100 YEARS! YOU SURE KNOW HOW TO MAKE A GIRL FEEL SPECIAL!!

WE DON'T TAKE ORDERS FROM ANYONE -- LEAST OF ALL YOU!

NOW PACK YOUR THINGS!

I CAME HERE TO PICK YOU UP AND TAKE YOU WITH ME ....

NOW WHY WOULD WE EVER WANT TO LEAVE THIS PARADISE, WHERE WE CAN LIVE AND DO AS WE PLEASE?

LATER, SAILOR!

WE'VE GOT BETTER THINGS TO DO!

WE COULD CARE LESS ABOUT YOUR SAD DELUSIONS, ALBERICH DEAR ...

BUT I'M ABOUT TO CONQUER VALHALLA! YOU THREE ARE TO BE MY QUEENS! NOW GET IN HERE!!

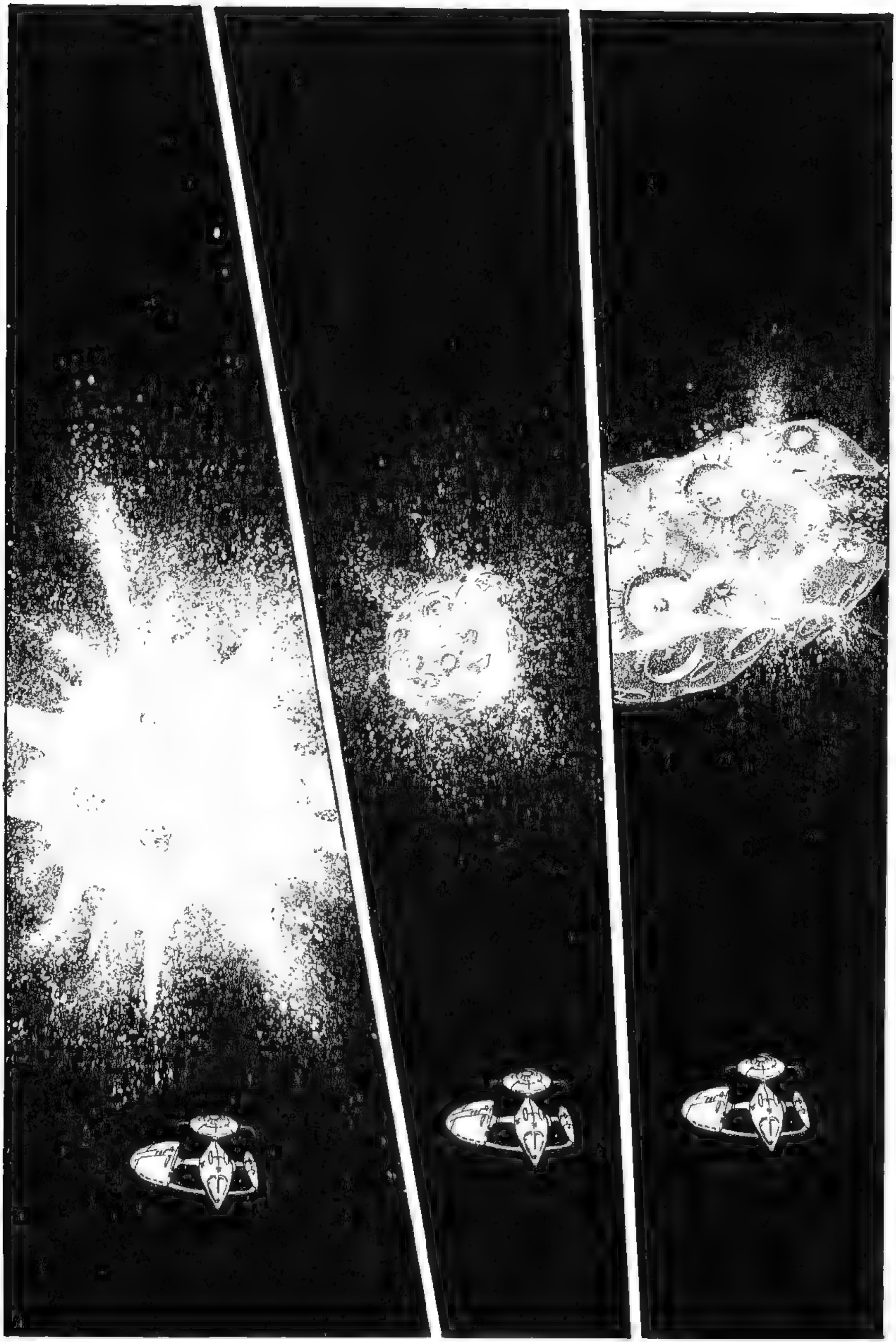
... BUT ... BUT YOU WERE TO BE MY QUEENS ...

... AND INSTEAD THEY WANT TO FROLIC, PLAY, AND SCREW AROUND ALL DAY! TYPICAL ... **WOMEN!!**

SIGH I COULD HAVE GIVEN THEM THE UNIVERSE ...

SINCE YOU'VE REJECTED ME, GIRLS ... I NO LONGER HAVE ANY USE FOR YOU.

GOOD RIDDANCE!



THOSE LITTLE PRIMATES ARE IN FOR QUITE A SHOCK ONCE THEY MAKE IT TO THE GARDENS ...!

IT WOULD SEEM THAT MIIME AND THE HUMANS WHO PROTECT HER HAVE LANDED SAFELY, AND ARE NOW GETTING READY TO EXPLORE THEIR SURROUNDINGS.

TOCHIRO! STICK CLOSE!!

HOW VERY ODD!

IT'S HARD TO SEE VERY FAR IN THIS MIST, AND SCANNERS ARE USELESS.

WAIT ... THIS IS NOT FOG ... AND IT ISN'T SAND EITHER. IT'S ... SOME KIND OF GOLD METAL POWDER ...

PERHAPS ... BUT IF THE PIRATES OF OLD COULD SEE THIS, THEY WOULD HAVE THOUGHT THEY HAD FOUND EL DORADO.

THAT EXPLAINS WHY SCANNERS WON'T WORK. NATURAL CHAFF, PERHAPS?

YATTARAN! THERE'S SOME KIND OF BUILDING STRUCTURE AHEAD. LET'S HEAD FOR IT -- BUT NICE AND EASY!

NICE AND EASY! AYE AYE, SIR!!

"ALL THAT GLITTERS IS NOT GOLD ...." TELL THAT TO THE ARCADIA. SHE'S GETTING A PRETTY GOOD COAT OF THIS STUFF.

WHOA!! HARLOCK?! HARLOCK!!

TOCHIRO! FULL POWER! YOU'VE GOT TO--

THEY DON'T SHOW ON THE SENSORS, SIR! MUST BE SOME KIND OF TACTILE PLANT LIFE!!

SIR, IF I MAY, YOU NEED TO GET BACK IN HERE AT ONCE! WE DON'T KNOW HOW HIGH THOSE THINGS CAN REACH!!

HE'S GONE!

BUT TO WHERE?

SOMEHOW I DON'T THINK THEY MEANT TO HARM TOCHIRO ...

AYE AYE, CAPTAIN!

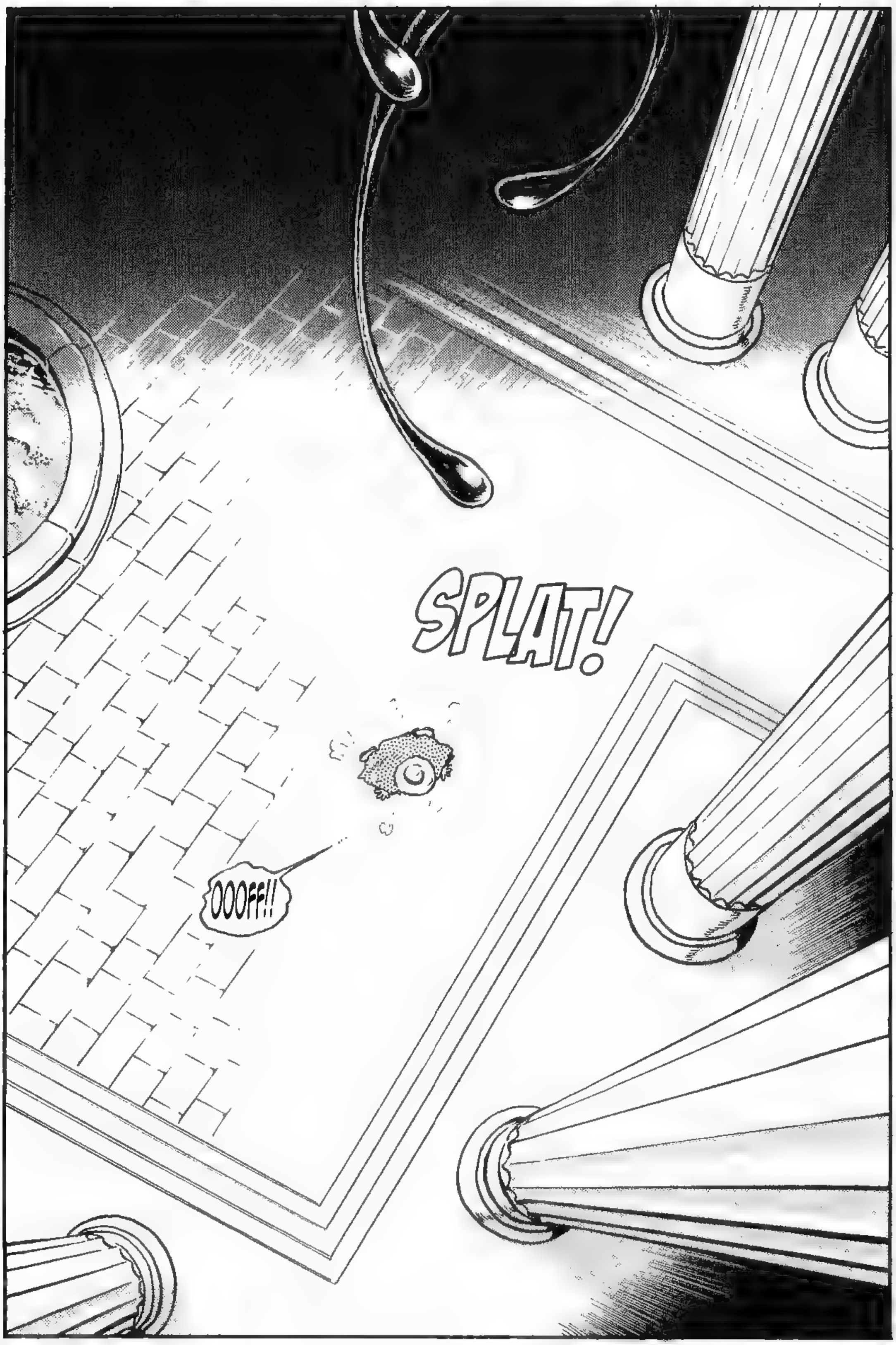
YATTARAN! SENSOR SWEEPS, MAXIMUM POWER! AND ALL HANDS YOU CAN SPARE TO THE VIEWING PORTS! I WANT TOCHIRO FOUND!!

HEY!! QUIT THAT!! OW!! STOP IT!! DON'T POKE ME THERE!! OOOFF!!!

THEY'RE PULLING ME STRAIGHT DOWN! GOD, BUT I HOPE I DON'T HIT BOTTOM! NO TELLING WHAT'S DOWN THERE!!

NO SIGNAL! EITHER IT'S ALL THAT DAMN GOLD DUST OR THERE'S SOMETHING IN HER BLOCKING THE SIGNAL!

UH-OH.


SPLAT!
OOOFF!!

UUNNNGGHH ....

WELL, SO MUCH FOR THAT ... HMM??

HOT DAMN!



The Rhinegold

Ring 10 – Freya

PERHAPS SUCH COULD BE FORGIVEN, IF THEY WEREN'T SO STUPID! OH, WOTAN! IT'S LIKE WATCHING MONKEYS CAPER ON SOME BACKWATER WORLD!

THESE PRIMITIVE "HUMANS," AS THEY CALL THEMSELVES, SEEM GUIDED BY THEIR INSTINCTS. SUCH IMPULSIVE CREATURES!

SPEAKING OF WHICH, IT SEEMS THAT FASOLT AND FAFNER HAVE FINISHED WITH FREYA, AND HAVE RESUMED THEIR WORK ON THE FORTRESS.

ONCE ALBERICH AND THAT RABBLE OF HIS ARE DEALT WITH, WE CAN DISPOSE OF THESE "HUMANS" AT OUR LEISURE.

THEY TOO SHOULD BE PUNISHED FOR WHAT THEY DID -- OR RATHER, THE DEAL THEY FORCED UPON YOU ... BUT THAT CAN WAIT. THE GIRL SURVIVED HER ORDEAL. SOON, SHE WILL BE ABLE TO RESUME PLAYING THE COSMIC ORGAN.

NOT AT ALL, MY LORD WOTAN! I JUST FIND THE WHOLE SITUATION ABSURDLY IRONIC ...

YOU SEEM AMUSED BY HER SUFFERING, FRICKA. THAT IS CRUEL, EVEN FOR YOU.

FORTUNATELY, NOW THAT FASOLT AND FAFNIR HAVE RESUMED THEIR WORK, THE FORTRESS WILL BE FINISHED IN TIME.

I WILL DEAL WITH YOU LATER ... RIGHT NOW, ALBERICH IS OUR MAIN CONCERN. HIS FLEET NEARS THE CLOSEST JUMP POINT FOR A PORTAL TO VALHALLA ...

WOTAN ... I SEE ANOTHER SHIP BEHIND ALBERICH'S FLEET, HIDING IN ITS WAKE ...

WHERE? I CAN'T SEE ANYTHING IN THE VISUALS EXCEPT FOR THE NIBELUNG SPACE BATTLESHIPS.

AHH ... NOW I SEE IT! VERY CLEVER, WHOEVER THAT PILOT IS ... USING BOTH A SENSOR CLOAK AND HIDING IN THE FLEET'S EXHAUST TRAIL!!

IT WOULD SEEM THAT AT LEAST ONE OF THE BEINGS IN THAT UNIVERSE ARE ALSO INTERESTED IN ALBERICH'S DOINGS, LORD WOTAN!

WHO KNOWS THE AFFAIRS OF MORTALS? WHO CARES, UNLESS THEY CONCERN US SOMEHOW?

ALBERICH'S FLEET CAN'T SEE IT BECAUSE OF THESE THINGS. I WONDER WHAT ITS PILOT IS AFTER ...

MY MAIN CONCERN IS ALBERICH. ONE MORE MORTAL'S ARRIVAL IS INSIGNFICANT, COMPARED WITH THAT ...

OH, NOTHING ... I WAS JUST MUSING ON THE FACT THAT IF IT WERE NOT FOR A FEW MORTALS IN THAT UNIVERSE WHO STILL HONOR THE NAME OF WOTAN, WE WOULD NOT BE GETTING THESE IMAGES ...

... WHAT IS IT? WHY ARE YOU SMILING LIKE THAT, FRICKA?

I HAD ALMOST FORGOTTEN WHAT IT WAS LIKE TO DABBLE ON THE MORTAL PLANES OF EXISTENCE. IT HAS BEEN SO LONG SINCE WE BECAME DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN THE AFFAIRS OF THE UNIVERSE.

IT IS ONLY BECASE I HAVE NOT YET REASSERTED MY RULE THAT WE MUST RELY ON MERE MORTALS! THE GODS EXISTED LONG BEFORE ANY OTHER BEINGS IN THE RINGS OF TIME! OUR KNOWLEDGE IS THE GREATEST, AND THESE MORTALS ARE JEALOUS OF US FOR IT!!

IF ONLY TIME HAD NOT BEGUN TO FLOW HERE! IF ONLY WE HAD OUR FULL POWERS!!

... AND YET, EVEN AS THEY RISE TO THE ZENITH OF THEIR CURRENT POWER, AN ENEMY OF THEIR OWN MAKING AWAITS THEM IN DAYS TO COME ... AND ANOTHER BEHIND THAT, EVEN MORE POWERFUL ...

HUMANS ARE LOUD, AND BOISTEROUS, AND SWAGGER ACROSS THEIR UNIVERSE AS IF THEY OWN IT ... AND YET ...

IT IS SAID THAT THE WEAKEST DOG BARKS THE STRONGEST.

IT IS A SHAME, REALLY. THESE PRIMITIVES ARE IN MANY WAYS BETTER THAN THE NIBELUNGEN. SO STRONG ... AND SUCH A SENSE OF DIRECTION! WHAT GREAT PETS THEY WOULD HAVE MADE!

THE DAY OF OUR DOOM MAY BE DRAWING NIGH, BUT SO TOO IS THAT OF THE HUMANS. THEY WILL FIGHT LIKE THE BEASTS THEY ARE, BUT IN THE END, THEY WILL FALL ...

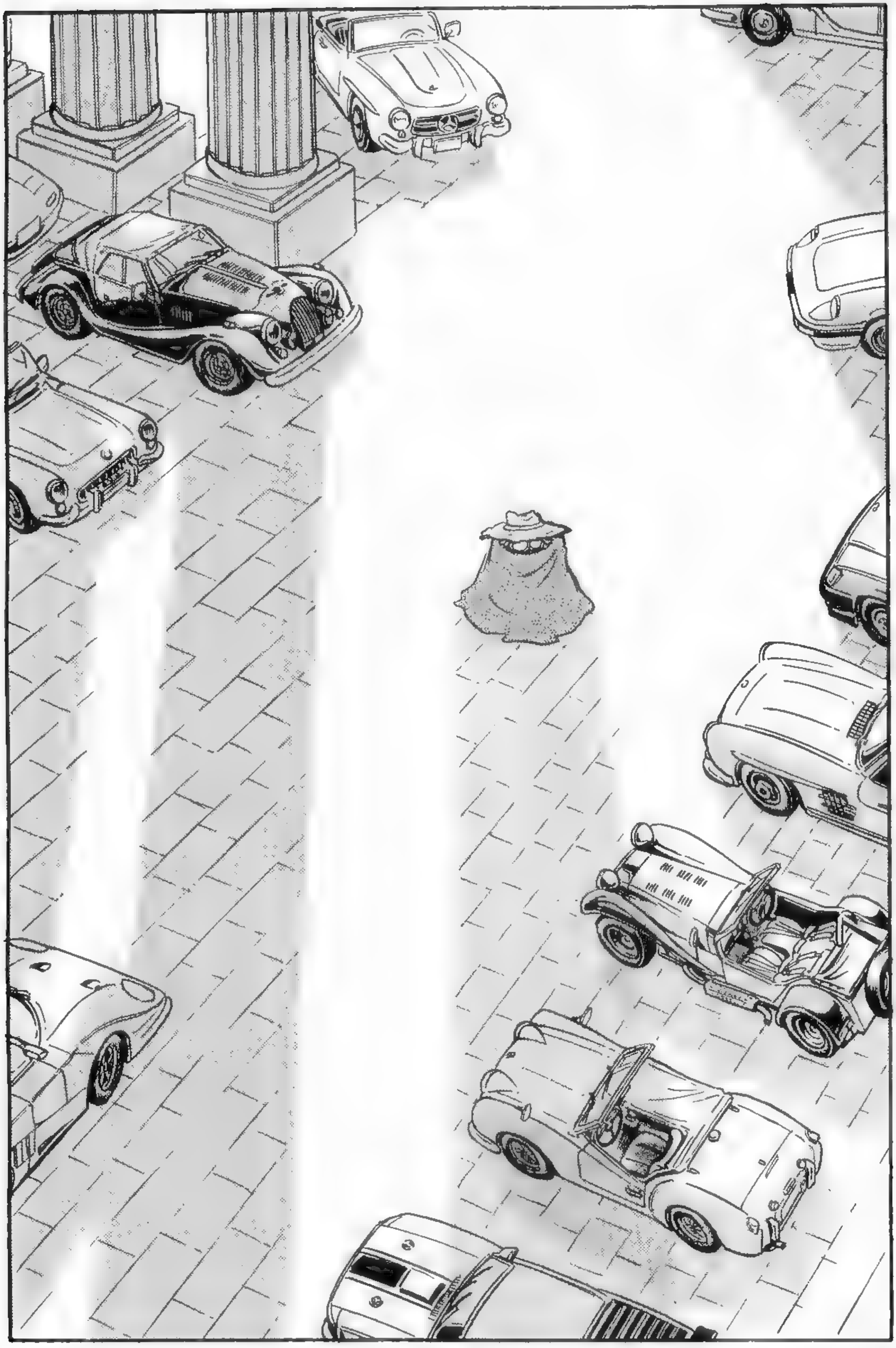
A FEMALE. I PERCEIVE ... SHE HOPES TO COME HERE TO FIND ONE OF THE MALES ALREADY HERE ....

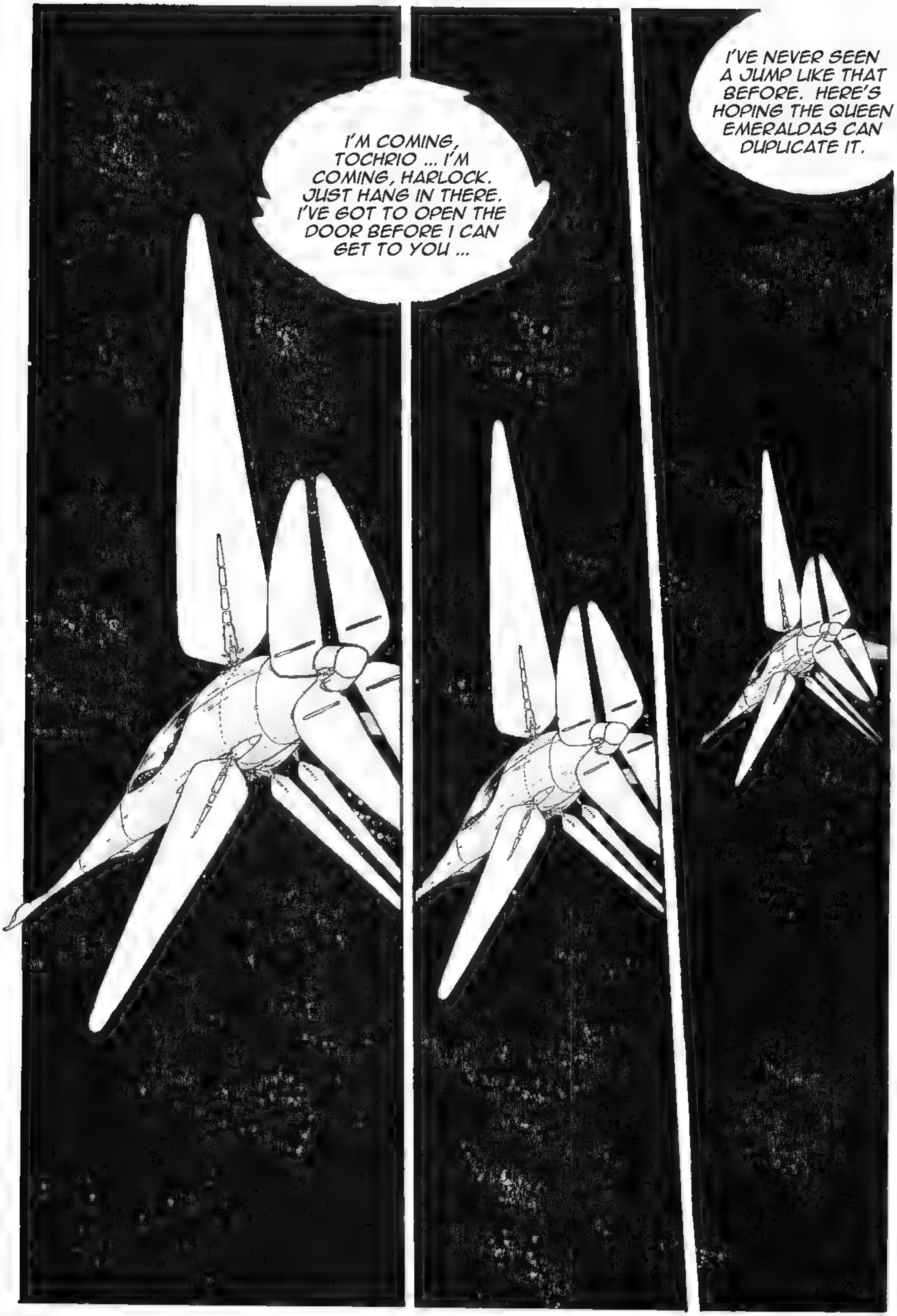
I SEE YOUR POINT ... LIKE THIS ONE, WHO FOLLOWS ALBERICH ...

THE FEMALE'S CRAFT IS QUITE ADVANCED ... BUT IT IS BUILT FOR STEALTH, NOT SPEED.

SHE WILL NOT MAKE THE PORTAL IN TIME ...

... AND YET SHE STILL FOLLOWS ALBERICH. IS SHE A FOOL?




I'M COMING, TOCHRIO ... I'M COMING, HARLOCK. JUST HANG IN THERE. I'VE GOT TO OPEN THE DOOR BEFORE I CAN GET TO YOU ...
I'VE NEVER SEEN A JUMP LIKE THAT BEFORE. HERE'S HOPING THE QUEEN EMERALDAS CAN DUPLICATE IT.

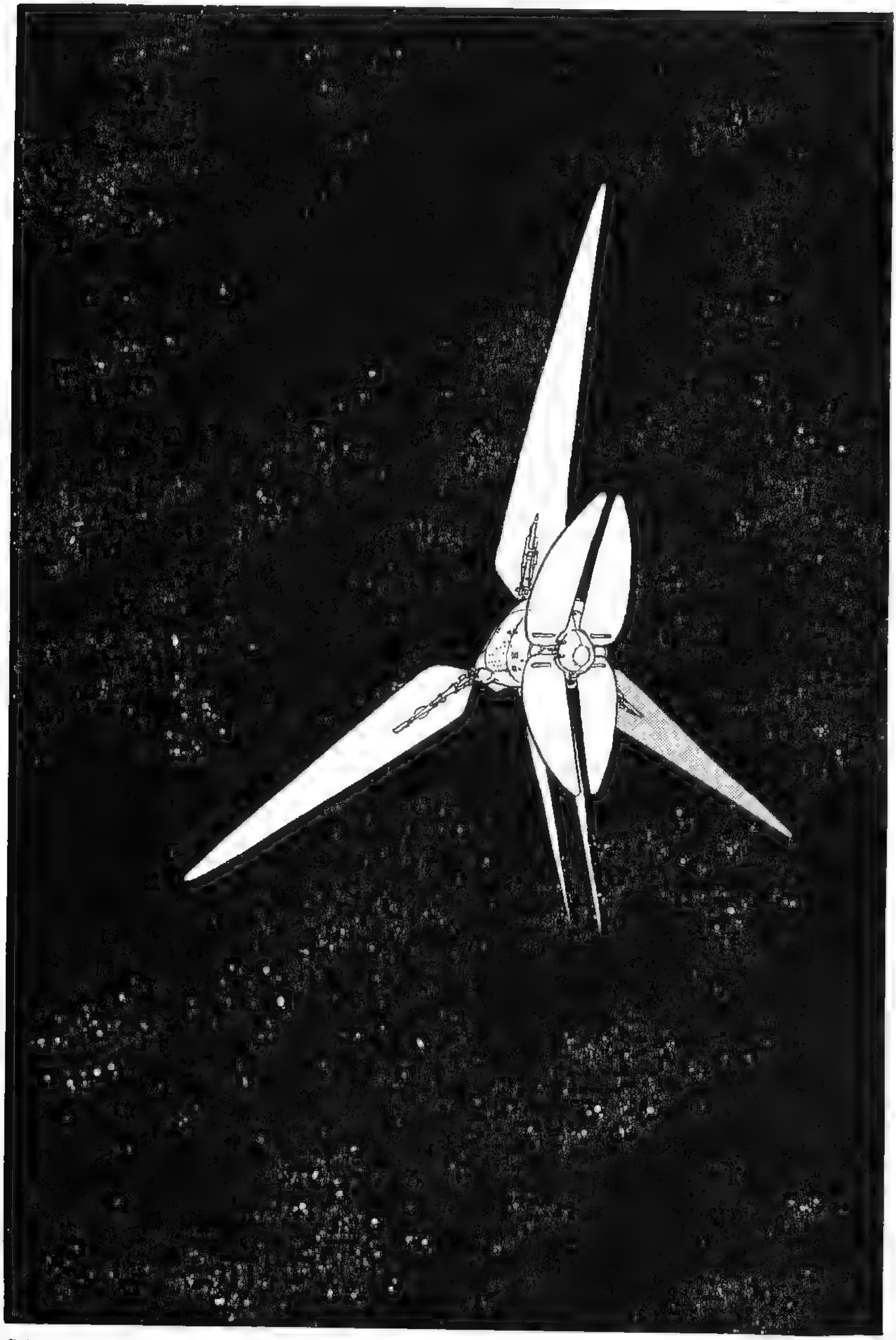
MAYBE WE CAN CONVINCE THE SPACE PATROL TO GIVE US ANOTHER.

... BUT TOCHRIO'S NOT GOING TO BE HAPPY ABOUT MY HAVING TO LEAVE THE PROBE SHIP BEHIND.

SOMEDAY I'LL HAVE TO FIND A WAY TO THANK THAT UGLY ALBERICH FOR LEAVING THIS FLITTER WHERE I COULD FIND IT ...

WHAT IS THAT PRIMATE DOING? SHE DIDN'T EVEN TRY TO FOLLOW THEM THOUGH.

SHE'S FRIGHTENED OF ALBERICH, NO DOUBT! NOT LIKE THE OTHER HUMANS WHO CAME HERE. MAYBE WE SHOULD DESTROY HER ....



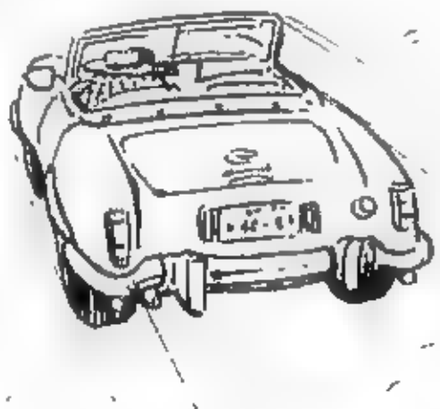
WAIT A MINUTE ... WHAT WOULD A GROUP OF NORSE GODS BE DOING WITH THEIR OWN TERRAN 20TH CENTURY CAR COLLECTION?

SO MANY VINTAGE SPORTS CARS! I WANT THEM ALL!!

EVERY ANTIQUE SPORTS CAR I EVER WANTED IS HERE ...

... MINE IS BUT TO GRAB AND FLY! THIS ONE WILL DO NICELY.

... OH, WELL. MINE IS NOT TO REASON WHY ...



DAMN! THE FOG'S GETTING THICK AGAIN. I'M GONNA HAVE TO SLOW DOWN BEFORE I HIT SOMETHING ....


DAMNIT!! AN ILLUSION! THE FOG? OR MAYBE THOSE STRANGE PLANTS? WHO KNOWS ... AND JUST WHERE THE HELL AM I NOW?

WAIT ... WHAT'S THAT SOUND?

EITHER I'M HEARING THINGS ...

... OR THERE'S SOMETHING WATCHING ME ...

MIIME?!! NO, WAIT ...

THIS ISN'T MIIME ... BUT SHE COULD BE HER TWIN.

WHO'S THERE?

RUSTLE ...

RUSTLE ...

UUUUUUUUHHHHHHHH ...

YES ... IT WAS THE WILL OF WOTAN ... I HAD NO CHOICE ... NO SAY ...

WOTAN DID THIS?!

NO ... BUT HE ALLOWED IT TO HAPPEN ... SO THAT THE BROTHERS WOULD GO BACK TO WORK ....

WHO ARE THEY?

GOOD LORD, WOMAN, YOU'VE BEEN--!

MY ... MY NAME ... IS ... FREYA ...

WHO ARE YOU?

WOTAN'S DOING, TOO.

YOU ... YOU ARE A MORTAL ... HOW DID YOU GET HERE?

SAY, YOU LOOK A LOT LIKE MIIME. SHE CAME HERE WITH US.

MIIME? SHE IS HERE? THEN WOTAN MUST HAVE CALLED HER!

AH, THAT EXPLAINS A LOT ...

SHE ... MIIME ... IS MY ELDER SISTER. WE ARE BOTH OF THE NIBELUNGEN. WE ARE BOTH TRAINED TO PLAY THE COSMIC ORGAN ...

PLEASE ... PLEASE SAVE ME! PLEASE PROTECT ME FROM THE GIANTS!!

HEY, CALM DOWN! THEY'RE GONE NOW! DON'T WORRY. I'M HERE. I'LL PROTECT YOU. THERE'S NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT ...

WAIT A MINUTE. DID YOU SAY "GIANTS?"

THEY ... THEY GRABBED ME ... THEY THREW ME DOWN ... THEIR HANDS ... THEIR COLD TOUCH ... I COULDN'T STAND IT! I ... I ...

THEY WERE THE ONES WHO TOOK ME ... AS PAYMENT FOR COMPLETING WOTAN'S FORTRESS.

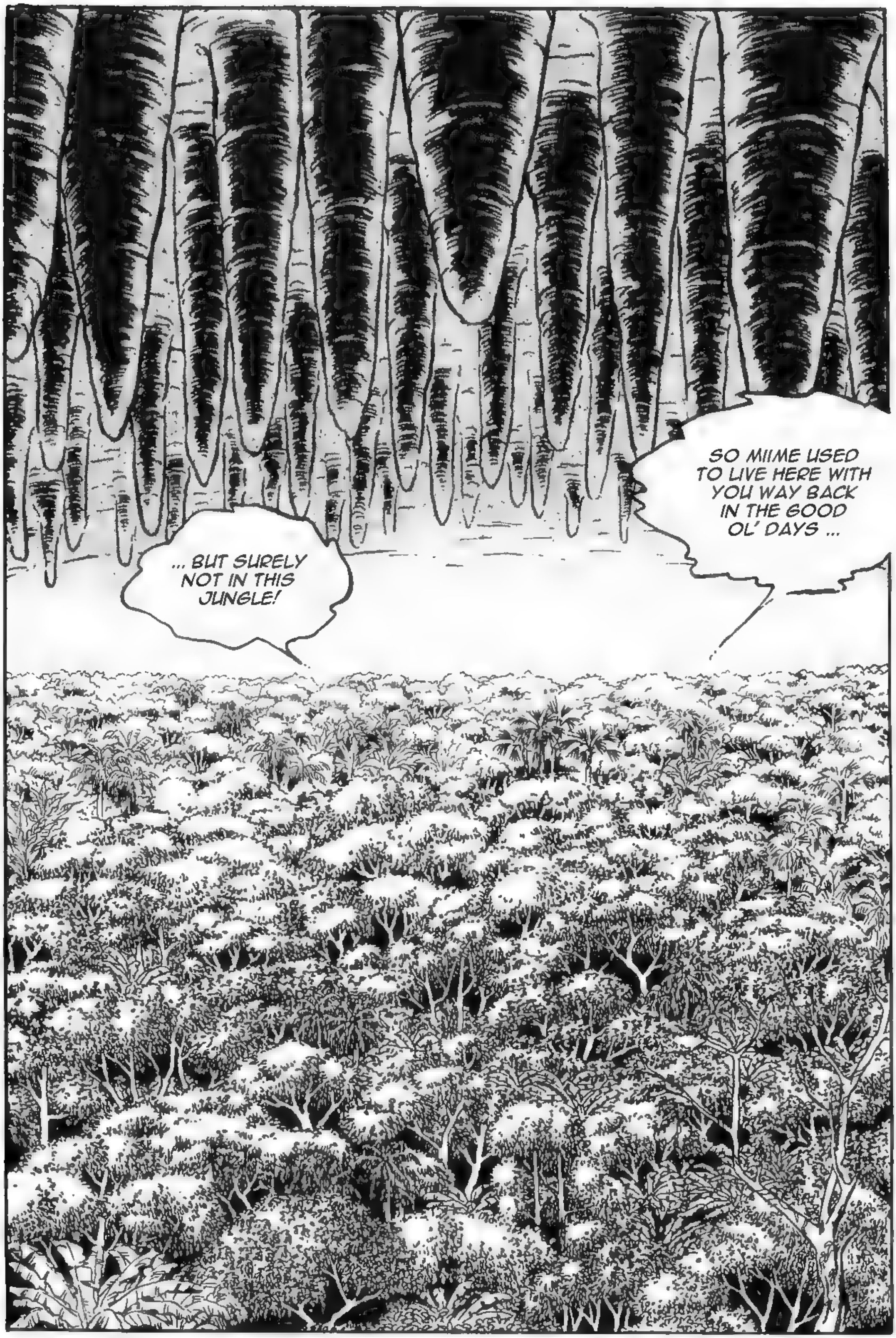
FASOLT AND FAFNER ... OF THE GIANTS OF RISENHEIM.


I MUST GET BACK TO THE COSMIC ORGAN AND RESUME PLAYING ...
... FOR IF I DO NOT, THE END OF THE UNIVERSE IS NOT LONG IN COMING!



The Rhinegold

Ring 11 – Seeking the Prize

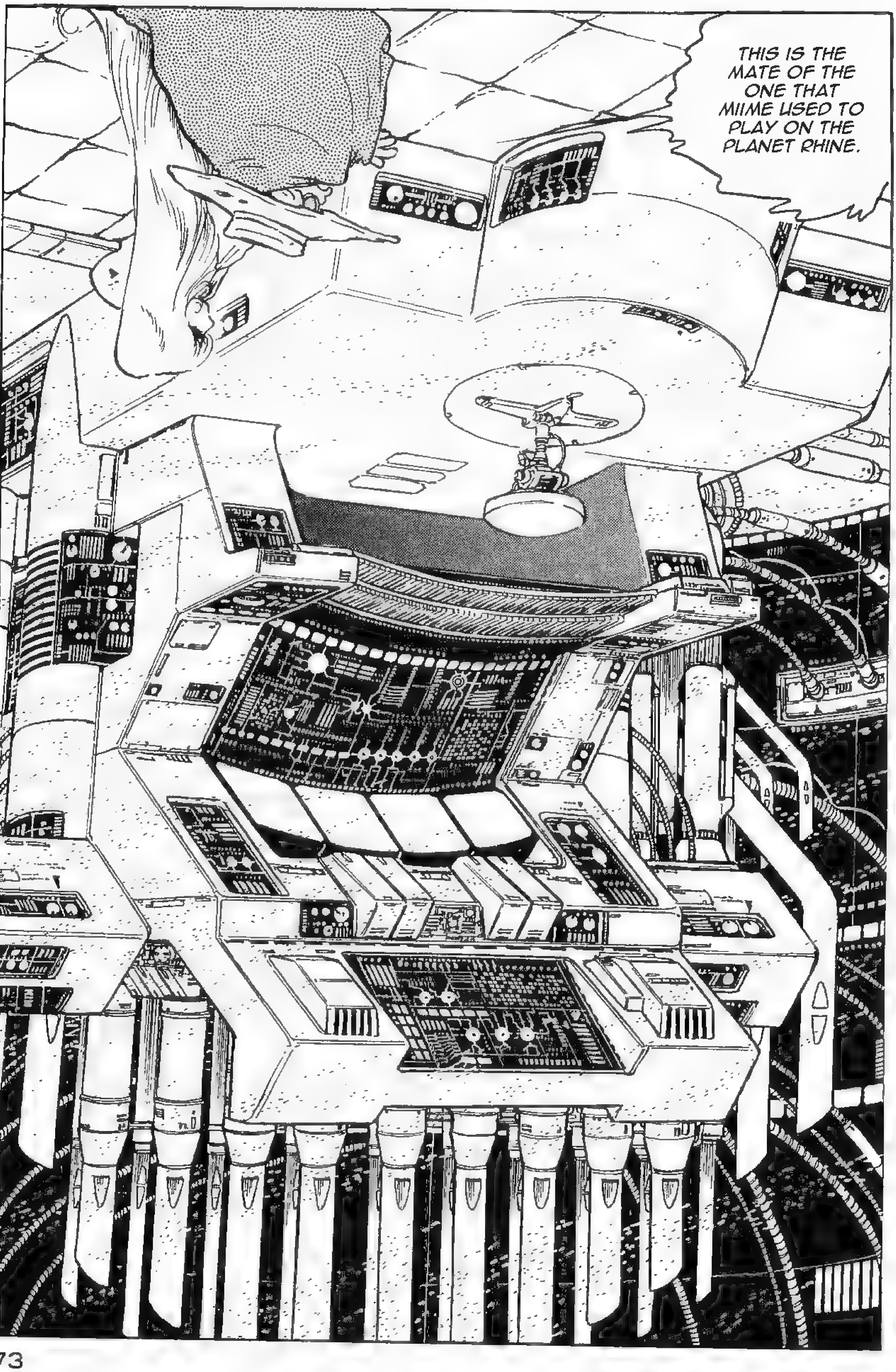

... BUT SURELY NOT IN THIS JUNGLE!
SO MIIME USED TO LIVE HERE WITH YOU WAY BACK IN THE GOOD OL' DAYS ...

WOW ...!

AHEAD OF US IS THE COSMIC ORGAN OF VALHALLA ....

THIS IS AN ARTIFICIAL WORLD. ITS GRAVITY WORKS DIFFERENTLY DEPENDING ON WHERE YOU ARE. HERE, WE CAN WALK ON THE WALLS AND CEILING.

HEY! WE'RE WALKING ON THE WALLS!!


THIS IS THE
MATE OF THE
ONE THAT
MIIME USED TO
PLAY ON THE
PLANET RHINE.

FROM THE TIME I WAS OLD ENOUGH TO WORK THE KEYS, SHE WAS THERE ...

MIIME TAUGHT ME EVERYTHING.

EACH UNIVERSE HAS ITS OWN COSMIC ORGAN ... AND ALL OF THEM ARE TUNED TO THIS ONE IN VALHALLA ...

... SO THAT WHEN I WAS READY, I TOOK MY APPOINTED PLACE.

... AND IT IS MY PLAYING THAT SETS THE KEY CHORD FOR THE SONGS OF ALL OTHER ORGANS IN ALL OTHER UNIVERSES UNDER THE DOMAIN OF THE GODS.

SO THIS IS HOW THE GODS WERE ABLE TO CONTROL THE RINGS OF TIME!

MIND IF I TAKE A CLOSE-UP LOOK?

... BECAUSE YOURS WAS THE FIRST OF THE MANY UNIVERSES UNDER THE DOMAIN OF THE GODS! UNLESS THIS CAN BE SET RIGHT, TIME WILL MOVE OF ITS OWN ACCORD!

WHEN ALBERICH DESTROYED THE ORGAN IN YOUR UNIVERSE, THEN IT SENT A RIPPLE BACK THOUGH THE MASTER CHORD OF TIME ...

... AND NOW TIME HAS STARTED AGAIN IN VALHALLA ...

WELL ... LOOKS LIKE YOU MAY HAVE BEEN RIGHT ABOUT THEIR USEFULNESS, FRICKA -- BUT I DON'T LIKE THE WAY HE'S LOOKING AT THE ORGAN.

SO LONG AS THAT APE CONVINCES FREYA TO RESUME HER PLAYING AND DOESN'T BREAK IT, I DON'T CARE WHAT IT DOES.

... IT'S WARM IN HERE ... AS WARM AS A HUMAN BODY ...

AH! AN ACCESS PLATE! LET'S SEE WHAT MAKES YOU TICK, MY FRIEND ...

AND THIS FEELS LIKE SKIN-- WHAT THE HELL?!

IT'S BREATHING ... AND IT'S GOT A HEARTBEAT!

THIS IS NO NORMAL ORGAN! IT'S SOME KIND OF LIVING BEING!!

WHAT'S THAT UP THERE? COULD IT POSSIBLY BE ...

... SOME KIND OF BRAIN?!

FREYA, I--

UGH!

WHY WAS THIS RODENT INSIDE THE ORGAN, FREYA?

IT ... IT IS NOT A RODENT ... IT IS ... IT IS A HUMAN ....

YOU WILL COME WITH US TO THE FORTRESS. THERE YOU WILL BE SAFE FROM WHAT IS ABOUT TO HAPPEN. NEVER MIND THE RODENT. THE GARDEN WILL TAKE CARE OF IT.

TOCHIRO!! SOMEBODY!! HELP ME!!!

UURGH ... AHHH ... OOHH ... MY HEAD ... HEY? **HEY!!** ... SHIT.

HE MAY STILL PROVE USEFUL.

SHE KNOWS THE COSMIC ORGAN BETTER THAN FREYA. WHAT ABOUT THE RODENT?

DO NOT WORRY. MIIME IS ON HER WAY.

THIS IS A TROUBLING DEVELOPMENT. IT WAS NOT PART OF OUR BARGAIN!

I FOUND YOUR SISTER, AND THIS COSMIC ORGAN HERE -- AND THEN I GOT JUMPED BY TWO GIANTS.

WHAT HAPPENED?

TOCHIRO!!

SORRY ....

THEY CLUBBED ME AND TIED ME UP, THEN TOOK OFF WITH YOUR-- OOOFF!!

MII ... MIIME! SO GOOD ... TO SEE YOU ... OOH, MY HEAD ...

WE MUST GET HER BACK. WITHOUT HER TO PLAY THE COSMIC ORGAN OF VALHALLA, TIME WILL BEGIN TO SLIP IN ALL UNIVERSES. TIME HAS ALREADY BEGUN TO FLOW HERE, AND GOES EVER FASTER. IF IT IS ALLOWED TO SLIP TOO MUCH, WE MAY NEVER GET BACK ... AND OUR UNIVERSE WILL SPEED TOWARD ITS FINAL END ....

I'M SORRY ABOUT YOUR SISTER, MIIME. THEY GOT THE JUMP ON ME.

I FEAR FOR FREYA ... BUT THIS IS MORE IMPORTANT. THE FATES OF ALL UNIVERSES ARE NOW IN MY HANDS ....

I AM GOING INTO THE COSMIC ORGAN. CAN YOU HELP ME WITH THE HATCH?

YIKES!! IN THAT CASE, WE'D BETTER HURRY -- AND I'M YANKING YOU OUT OF HERE IN AN HOUR, READY OR NOT!

IT IS THE ONLY WAY TO REMOVE THE DISSONANCE ... BUT IF I STAY IN HERE FOR MORE THAN AN HOUR, THE ORGAN WILL DISSOLVE ME INTO THE ETERNAL VOID.

I MUST RETUNE THE ORGAN TO ACCOUNT FOR THE ONE DESTROYED ON RHINE.

HEY, THAT SOUNDS LIKE THE ARCADIA? BUT HOW ARE THEY GOING TO FIND US DOWN HERE? I CAN'T LEAVE MIIME NOW!

I HOPE YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING, MIIME.

THAT'S THE LEAST OF OUR PROBLEMS RIGHT NOW. JUST DO THE BEST YOU CAN AND FOLLOW MIIME'S SIGNAL, YATTARAN.

BUT SIR, THE ARCADIA WASN'T BUILT TO PLOW THROUGH A JUNGLE ...!

NO TIME TO EVADE! **BLAST IT OUT OF OUR PATH!!**

OBSTACLE DEAD AHEAD!!

BUT--

MIIME ALSO REQUESTED I KEEP YOU IN THE SAFEST PART OF THE SHIP, FOR REASONS SHE SAID YOU WOULD KNOW.

THE FIRST THING YOU'VE GOT TO LEARN ABOARD MY SHIP IS TO FOLLOW MY ORDERS. IS THAT CLEAR?

Y-YES, SIR ....

TADASHI ... ! I TOLD YOU TO STAY OFF THE BRIDGE.

BUT LOOK AT HOW THEIR SHIP IS TEARING UP OUR GARDENS! NOT TO MENTION THAT LITTLE MONKEY WANTING TO PLAY WITH THE COSMIC ORGAN!! THIS IS A GROSS INSULT, WOTAN!, YOU CAN'T IGNORE THIS ANY LONGER!!

THEY ARE RESOURCEFUL, THESE HUMANS ...

PERHAPS WE SHOULD BRING HIM HERE TO QUESTION HIM ....

YES ... AND THAT "LITTLE MONKEY," AS YOU CALL HIM, IS THE ONE WHO DESIGNED THAT SHIP ....

BZZZZZZZ

WHOA!!
HEY! HEY!!
PUT ME DOWN!!!
I'M GETTING SICK AND TIRED OF BEING VALHALLA'S DUDE IN DISTRESS!! PUT ME THE HELL ... DOWN ...

GULP

Y'KNOW, SINCE WE'RE ALREADY SO HIGH UP, WHY DON'T I JUST ENJOY THE RIDE?

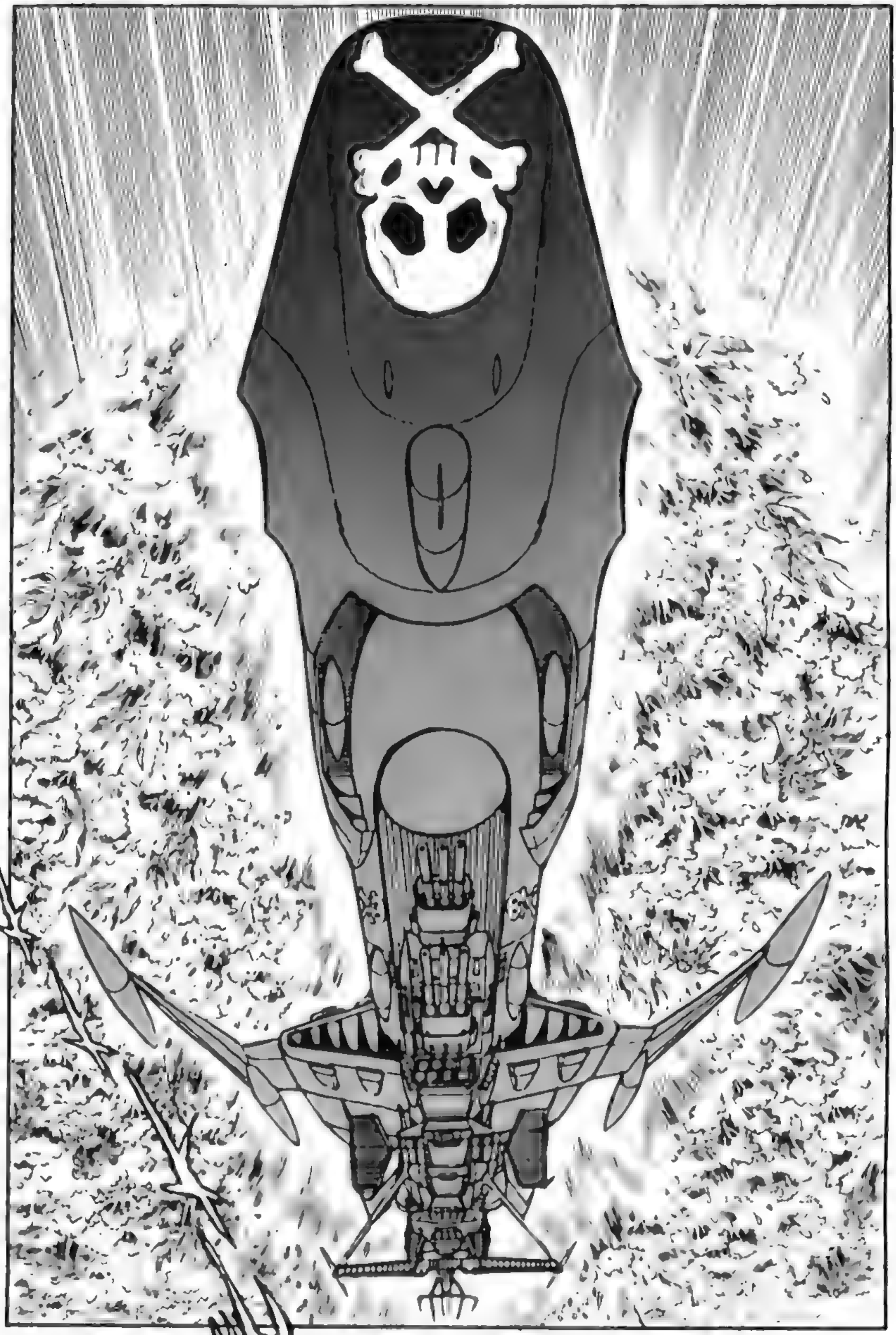
SURELY YOU JEST! WHY DON'T WE PUT A LITTLE HAT ON IT, GIVE IT A TIN CUP, AND THEN YOU CAN SEE IT FOR WHAT IT TRULY IS?

WHAT AN UNCOUTH LITTLE CHATTERBOX ... AND YET ... AND YET I SENSE IN HIS MIND AN INTELLECT FAR BEYOND THAT OF HIS STATION ...

YOUR PARDON, LORD WOTAN ... BUT WHY BOTHER WITH SUCH A PRIMATE AT ALL, EVEN IF HE DOES HAVE A GIFT OR TWO? HE AND THE OTHER PRIMATES CANNOT POSSIBLY HARM US.

I DO NOT JEST, WOMAN. MIND YOUR PLACE ... AND THERE IS MORE TO THIS LOWLY CREATURE THAN MEETS THE EYE.

ALBERICH IS BENEATH US ... AND YET THAT DAMMED REBEL WOULD CHALLENGE EVEN ME! NO, FRICKA, WE CANNOT LET SUCH AS THESE WALK THE RINGS OF TIME WITH IMPUNITY ....



CAPTAIN, I'VE GOT A SECOND SIGNAL, TOO ... IT'S TOCHIRO! SHE'S FOUND HIM! WE'VE FOUND THEM BOTH!!

THERE'S MIIME'S SIGNAL! IT'S WEAK ... WHAT WITH ALL THIS GOLD DUST IN THE AIR ... BUT IT'S HER'S!

OH, WELL ... IF I KNOW TOCHIRO, HE'S FOUND SOMETHING THAT'S STRUCK HIS FANCY AND HE'S GOING OFF TO INVESTIGATE IT. TYPICAL ....

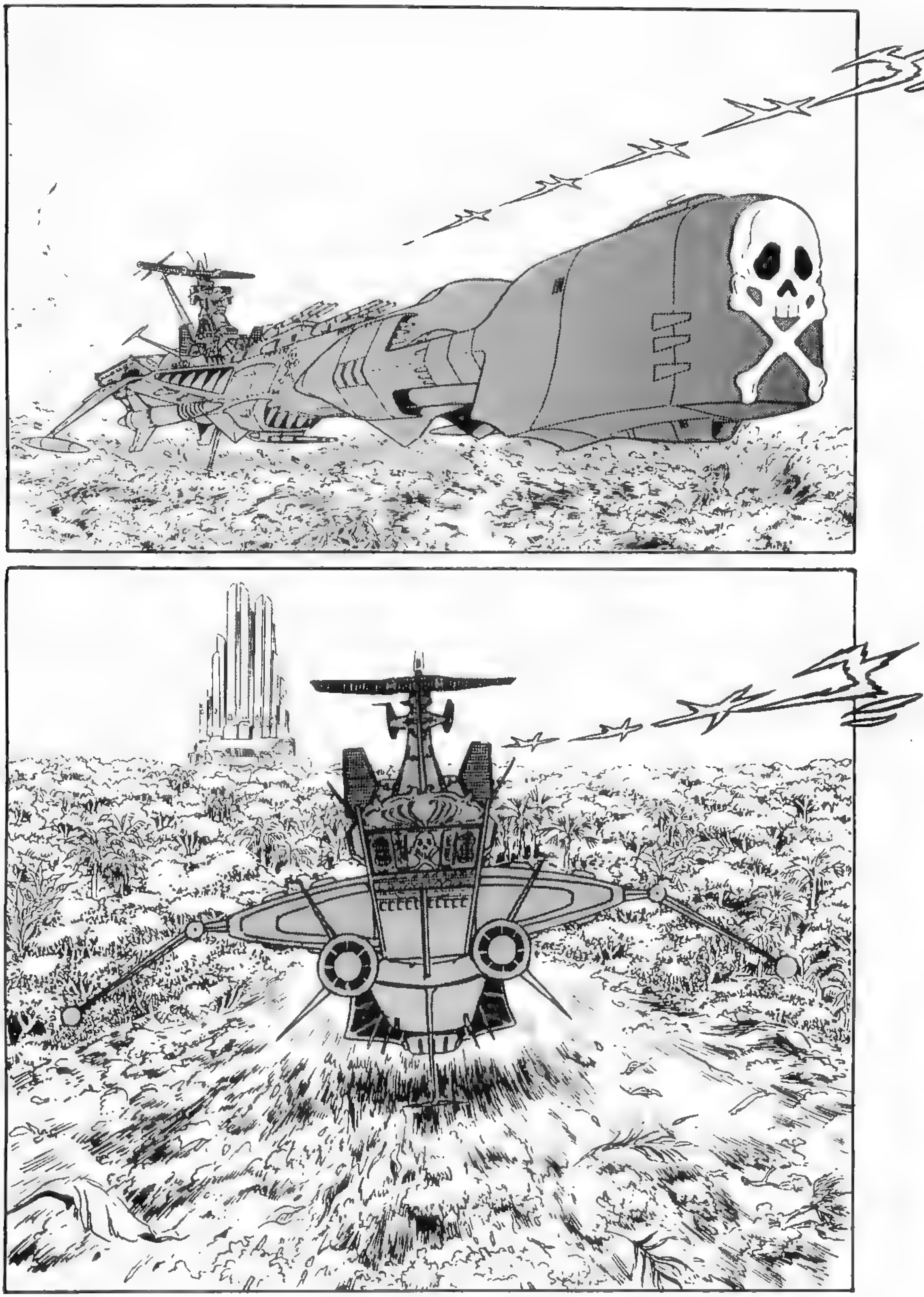
BUT HIS SIGNAL IS MOVING AWAY FROM HER ... WHY? WHAT'S HAPPENED HERE? WHY DID THEY SPLIT UP?

AYE-AYE, CAPTAIN!

TOCHRIO CAN TAKE CARE OF HIMSELF ... LET'S FIND MIIME!

ONE HERE, AND ONE IN OUR UNIVERSE! DO YOU THINK THERE'S SOME CONNECTION?

THAT'S THE SAME KIND OF ORGAN THAT MIIME WAS PLAYING ON THE PLANET RHINE!



TOCHIRO! ... TOCHIRO ... IT'S BEEN AN HOUR ... I ... I CAN'T ... WHERE ARE YOU? ... WHERE ... WHAT ...

... GOT ... TO GET ... TOCHIRO ... HELP ... HELP ME ...

I CAN FEEL ... THE ORGAN ... IT'S TONE IS ... IT'S TAKING ME ...

HARLOCK!

HEAR ME, HARLOCK! **CRASH INTO THE PIPES!!**

HURRY!!

AYE-AYE, CAPTAIN! ONE STACK OF SCRAP COMIN' RIGHT UP!

MIIME ... QUICK! YATTARAN! AIM THE SHIP AT THAT STACK OF PIPES AND RAM THEM!!

THIS HAD TO BE DELIBERATE, WOTAN. YOU MADE OFF WITH THAT OTHER LITTLE MONKEY, SO THE REST WRECKED THE ORGAN!

THEY RAMMED MY ORGAN ...

THOSE LITTLE BASTARDS RAMMED MY ORGAN!!!

I ... I DON'T KNOW, MY LORD ... WITHOUT FREYA'S ORGAN, THE MASTER RING OF TIME IS NO LONGER UNDER OUR CONTROL ... ALL OF THE OTHER RINGS OF TIME WILL SLIP AWAY FROM US! AND VALHALLA IS NO LONGER ETERNAL! WE ARE AGING!!

WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO NOW, FRICKA?!!

I'M GROWING OLD!!!

MY
MY HANDS

MY HANDS ... HAVE ... WRINKLES ...

IT'S THE FAULT OF THOSE HUMAN INTRUDERS! YOU SHOULD HAVE NEVER LET THEM IN HERE, WOTAN!!

A GOD ISN'T SUPPOSED TO GROW OLD!!!

WOTAN! THERE'S A DISTRESS CALL COMING IN FROM OUR PORTAL DEFENSE SATELLITES, ARGE AND SANDSAINA.

DISTRESS CALL? ALBERICH! HIS FLEET HAS ARRIVED!!


"THE ENEMY FLEET ... INCREDIBLE FIREPOWER! ... HEAVILY DAMAGED ... ARGE IS BREAKING UP ... INTERNAL INTEGRITY COMPROMISED ... SANDSAINA HAS CEASED FUNCTIONING COMPLETELY ... EVACUATING! I REPEAT, EVACU--"

THERE GO OUR PEOPLE. THEY'LL NEVER GET CLEAR IN TIME ....

THOSE PORTAL DEFENSE SATELLITES HAVE GUARDED THE GATES TO VALHALLA FOR COUNTLESS AEONS ... AND YET THEY'VE BEEN TORN APART IN A MATTER OF MINUTES!

IT'S THE POWER OF THE RING.

THEN I SUGGEST YOU CONTACT THOSE TWO AND HAVE THEM DEAL WITH ALBERICH AT ONCE!

IT IS AS I FEARED. ONLY THE FORTRESS CAN STOP HIM.

THIS IS HUMILIATING! WE ARE SUPPOSED TO BE THE GODS OF ALL CREATION, YET WE MUST NOW LOOK TO THOSE TWO TO SAVE US!

THEY KNOW, FRICKA ... AND AS YOU CAN SEE, THE FORTRESS IS COMPLETE.

... YES ...

I KNOW YOU AND YATTARAN DID WHAT YOU HAD TO DO TO SAVE ME ... YET I FEAR THAT IN WRECKING THE PIPES OF THE COSMIC ORGAN, YOU HAVE DONE GREAT HARM TO THE MUSIC OF THE SPHERES.

I'M GLAD WE GOT HERE IN TIME, MIIME.

JEE-ZUZ! YOU COULD AT LEAST SAY "THANK YOU," MIIME!

... UUHHH ... AHMMM ... WELL, I'M NOT IN LEAGUE WITH ALBERICH. I'M AGAINST HIM, SAME AS YOU--

SO THIS IS THE INTRUDER FROM THE GARDENS. ARE YOU IN LEAGUE WITH ALBERICH?!!

WE DON'T HAVE TIME FOR THIS MONKEY'S LIES, WOTAN!


ALBERICH'S FLEET IS ON ITS WAY! USE THE FORTRESS TO DESTROY IT! NOW!!

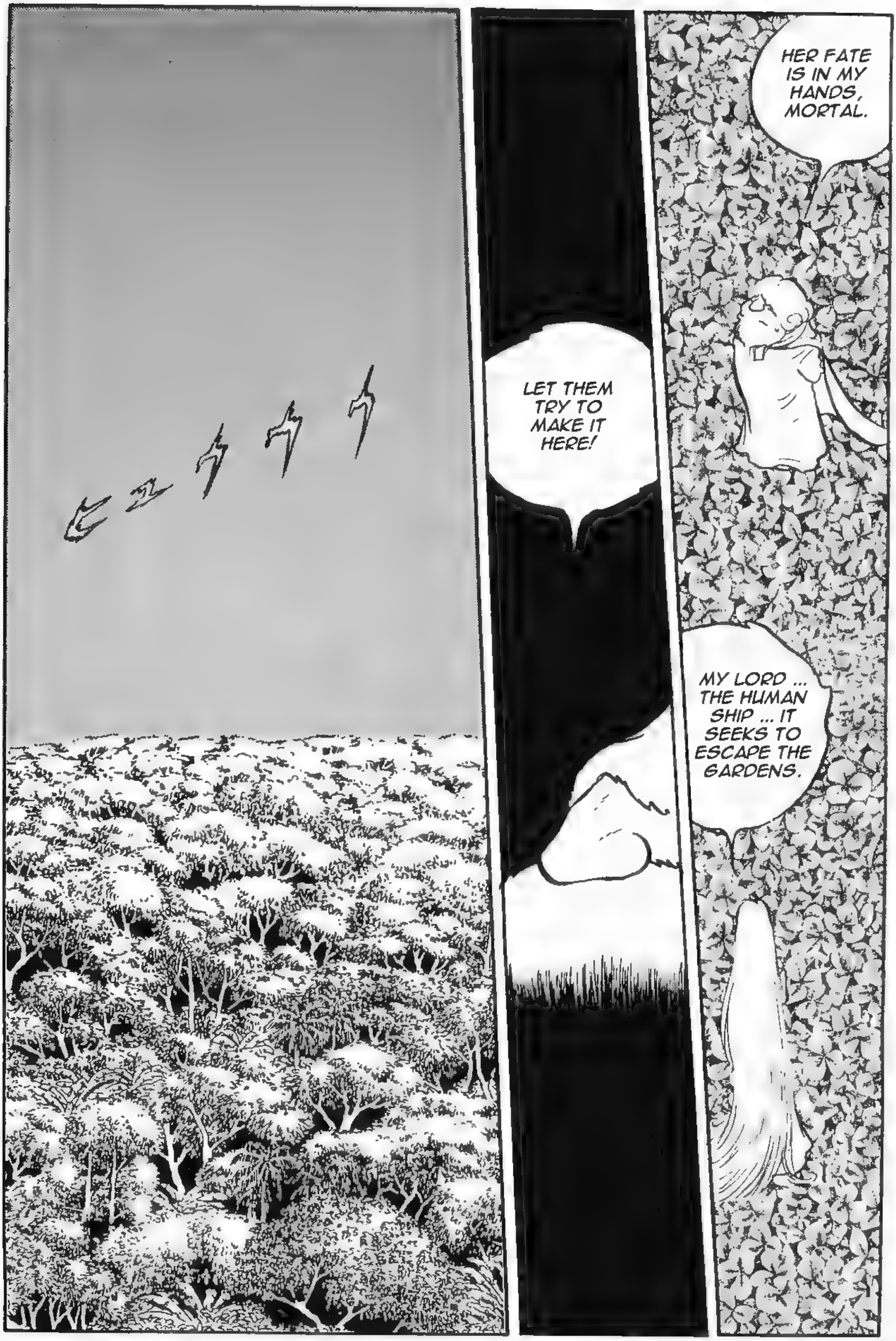
WOTAN! ALBERICH IS ON HIS WAY!! RIGHT NOW!! HE'S ALREADY DESTROYED BOTH OF THE PORTAL SATELLITES!! THIS APE CAN WAIT!!!

YOU MIGHT BE INTERESTED TO KNOW THAT YOUR FEMALE IS IN A SHIP SITTING ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE PORTAL.

YOUR KIND HAS KNOWLEDGE OF THINGS IT SHOULD NOT HAVE, AND YOU ARE GREAT AMONG YOUR KIND ...

SO TELL ME, HUMAN. WHY SHOULD I NOT CRUSH THE SHIP THAT WAITS FOR YOU IN YOUR OWN UNIVERSE?

... AND YET YOU MORTALS ARE TO US GODS AS MICE ARE TO YOU. EVEN AS THINGS NOW STAND, WE COULD EASILY REACH OUT AND SQUASH YOU ...


HER FATE IS IN MY HANDS, MORTAL.
LET THEM TRY TO MAKE IT HERE!
MY LORD ... THE HUMAN SHIP ... IT SEEKS TO ESCAPE THE GARDENS.



The Rhinegold

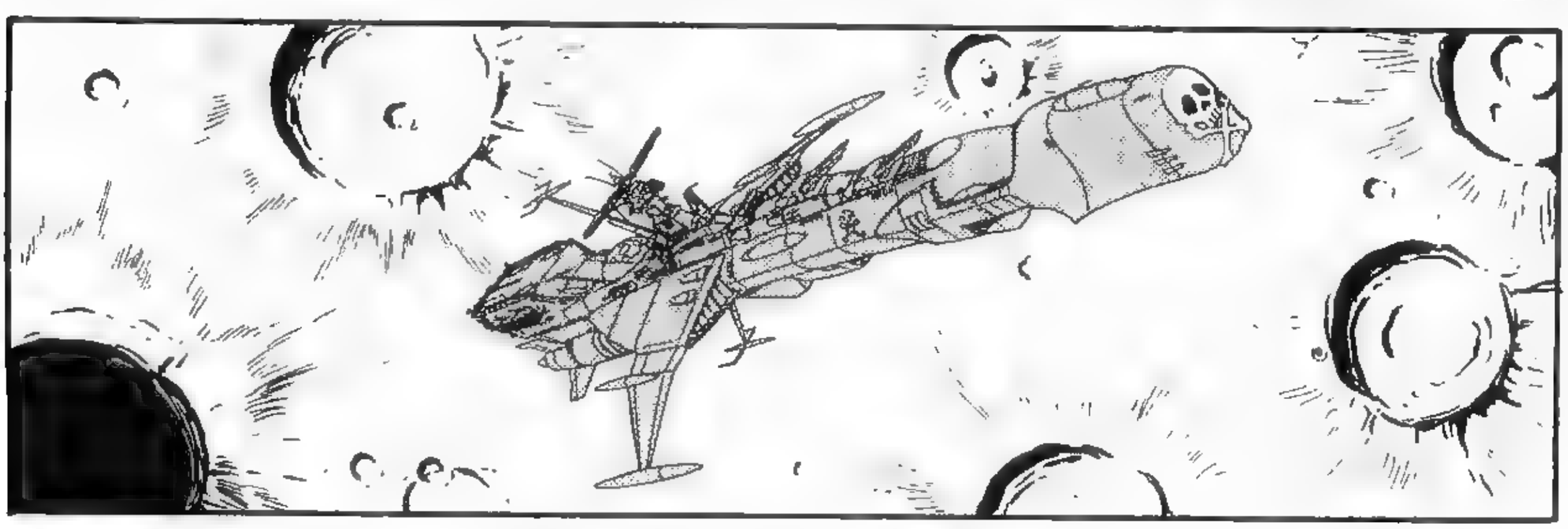
Ring 12 – The Meister Brothers

WE'RE WASTING TIME DOWN HERE. LET'S HEAD TO THE SURFACE!

LET'S NOT GET CAUGHT DOWN HERE SHOULD ALBERICH'S ATTACK SUCCEED.


THEY'RE RIGHT BELOW THE NEW FORTRESS! THIS COULD BE INTERESTING ...
THE HUMAN VESSEL HAS JUST EMERGED FROM A SURFACE CRATER.





HEY, LOOK! THE FORTRESS!

YES ... IT SEEMS TO BE FINISHED NOW. ALL HANDS, BATTLE STATIONS!

IMPUDENT LITTLE FOOLS! DO THOSE LITTLE APES THINK THEY STAND A CHANCE?

THE GIANTS KEPT THEIR WORD ... MY FORTRESS IS IMPREGNABLE!

THEY WILL FALL LIKE A FLY THAT DROWNS IN A GLASS OF WINE!

THEY'LL MAKE A GOOD TEST FOR THE FORTRESS. THE MIGHT OF THE HUMANS VERSUS THAT OF THE GIANTS.

LET IT BE FOR NOW. IF IT STARTS TO CAUSE A FUSS, KILL IT.

AND WHAT ABOUT THE PRISONER?

DAMN ... THIS IS NOT GOOD ...

THEY TOOK EVERYTHING EXCEPT MY CLOTHES!

OH, LOOK ... AN ILLUSION OF AN EARTH CITY TO KEEP ME HAPPY. SHIT!!

I GOTTA GET OUT OF HERE!!

FREYA!!

EH?

CLICK!

THE GODS INTERVENED, BEFORE I COULD BE TAKEN AWAY BY THE MEISTER BROTHERS.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT ALBERICH'S FLEET HAS ARRIVED.

THAT'S GOOD TO HEAR.

THEY SAID YOU WERE LOYAL ....

ALBERICH?! I GOTTA GET BACK TO THE ARCADIA!!!

AND SO THE TRUE BATTLE BEGINS!

THE MEISTER BROTHERS SEND WORD THAT THEY HAVE SIGHTED THE FLEET OF ALBERICH.

WHICH WILL THEY DESTROY FIRST, I WONDER? ALBERICH ... OR THE MONKEY SHIP ....

GOOD LUCK, OLD FRIEND.

ME, I USUALLY JUMP RIGHT INTO THE MIDDLE OF A MELEE HEADFIRST. PROBABLY WHY I END UP IN TROUBLE SO--

YOU'LL SIZE UP YOUR OPPONENT, AND THEN PICK THE RIGHT MOMENT TO STRIKE. I WISH I WERE THAT PATIENT.

FREYA!

THOSE IDIOTS! THEY MIGHT KNOW HOW TO BUILD AN GIGANTIC, IMPREGNABLE SPACE FORTRESS, BUT THEY DON'T KNOW THE FIRST THING ABOUT A WOMAN'S DELICATE NATURE ....

WAIT A MINUTE! THAT BED WASN'T THERE BEFORE! ... JUST AS WELL -- THE POOR GIRL LOOKS LIKE SHE NEEDED THE REST. THE GIANTS MUST HAVE WORKED HER OVER AGAIN BEFORE THEY LET HER GO.

I GUESS ALL I CAN DO IS SIT HERE AND WAIT FOR HER TO WAKE UP.

WHAT THIS ROOM NEEDS IS A GOOD MAN-SIZED VENT, LIKE IN THOSE OLD VIDS ...

DAMN! NOT A SEAM TO BE SEEN! THESE GODS BUILD WELL, IF ANYTHING.

I WISH I'D PAID MORE ATTENTION WHEN FREYA CAME IN. I MIGHT HAVE LEARNED HOW TO MAKE THAT DAMN DOOR REAPPEAR.

I WONDER HOW LONG I'VE BEEN IN HERE ...

THEN FOLLOW ME ...

I CAN HELP YOU GET BACK TO YOUR SHIP, BUT ONLY IF YOU TAKE ME WITH YOU!

YOU ... YOU'RE GONNA HELP ME ESCAPE?!

TOCHIRO? TAKE ME WITH YOU!

DAMN! I WAS SITTING RIGHT IN FRONT OF IT! YOU GOTTA TEACH ME THAT TRICK SOMETIME!

YOU DON'T HAVE TO ASK ME TWICE! I FEEL LIKE A DOG ON A LEASH IN HERE DOING NOTHIN' BUT RUNNING IN CIRCLES!!

I WANT TO SEE MY SISTER MIIME. IT'S BEEN SO LONG SINCE I'VE SEEN HER!

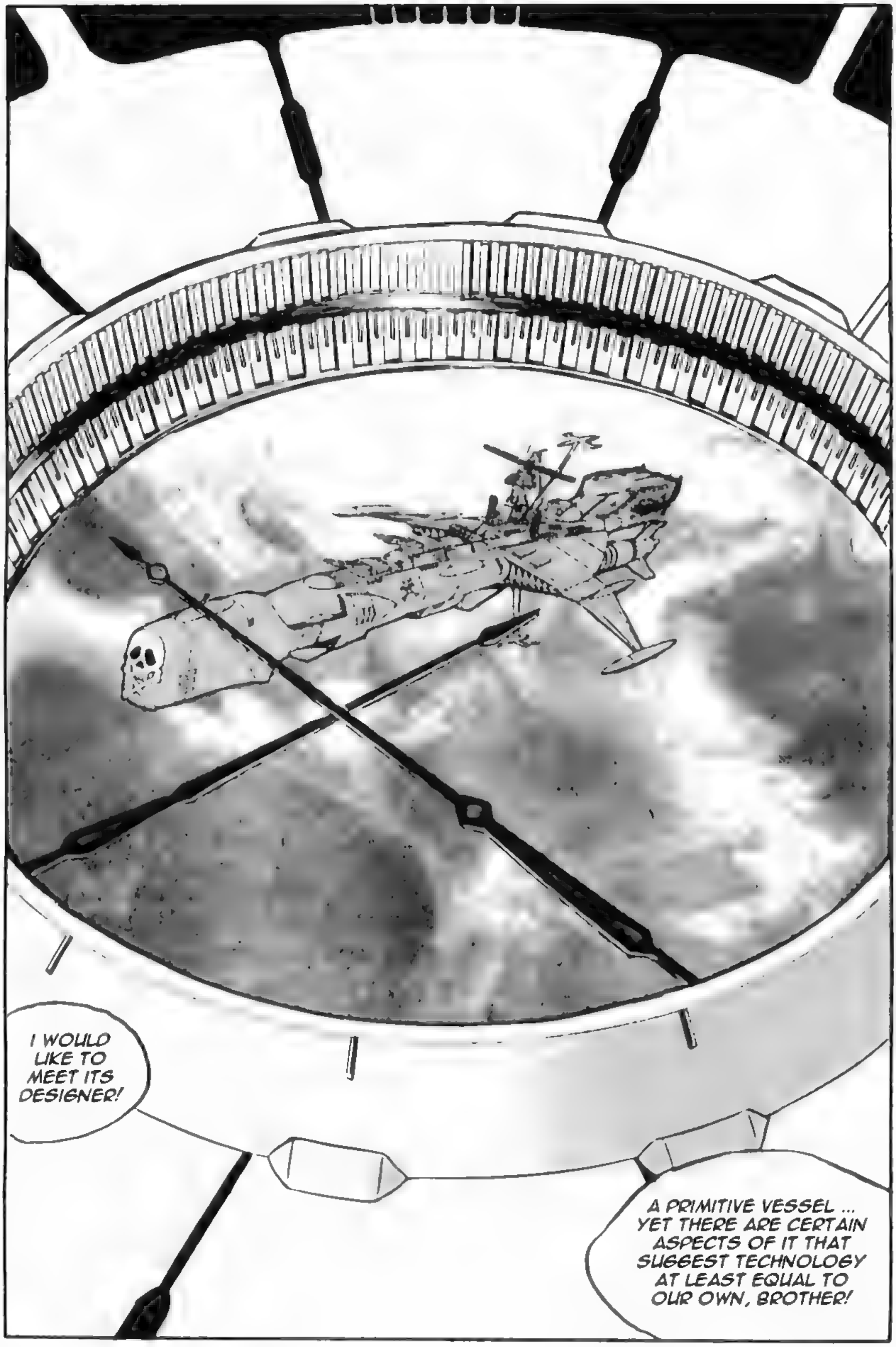
EH?

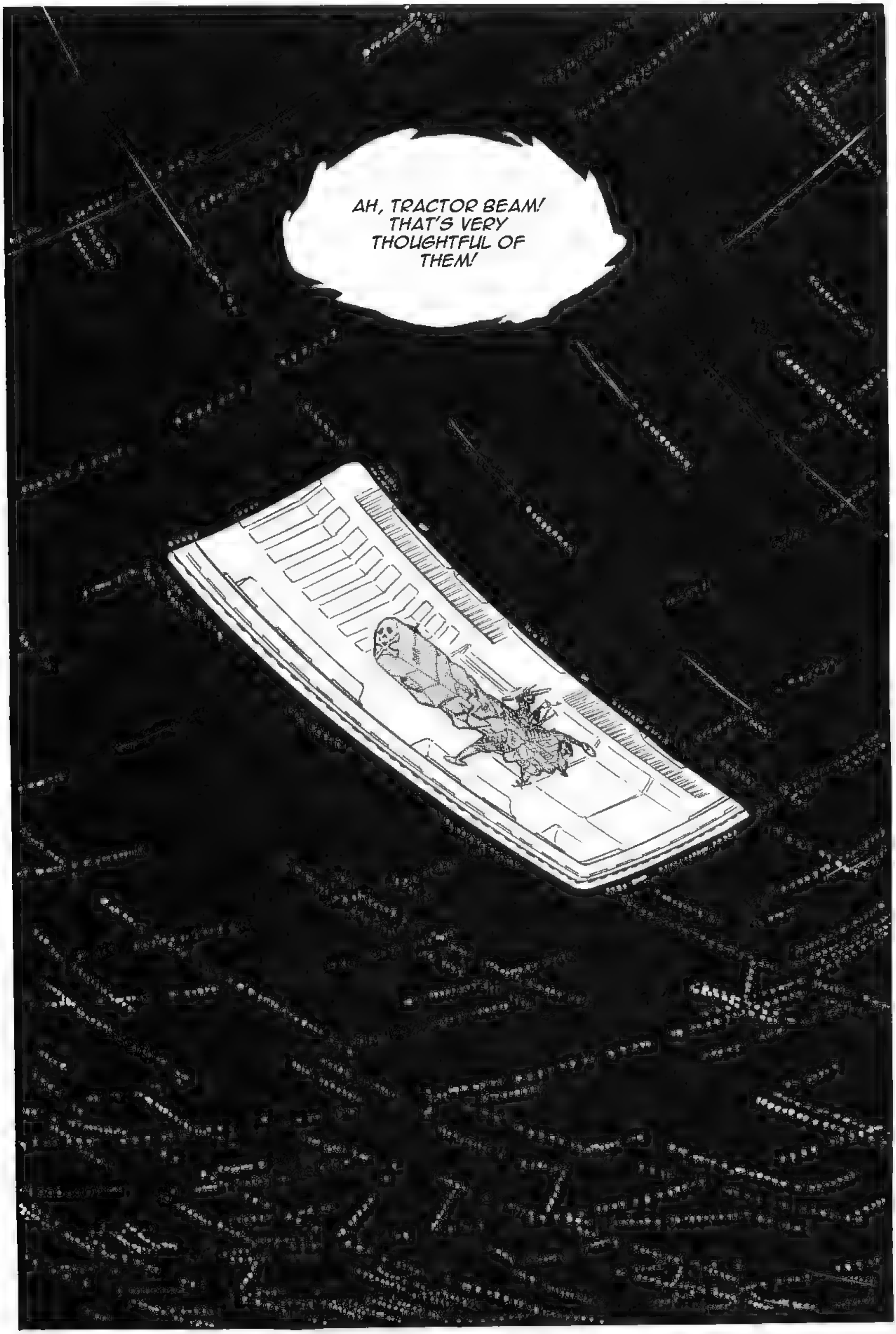
WELL, THEY HAVEN'T BLASTED US OUT OF THE SKY YET ... GO AHEAD.

CAPTAIN? I'M GETTING AN OLD-FASHIONED RADIO SIGNAL! "WE WISH TO TALK. PLEASE APPROACH OUR EQUATOR."

YATTARAN? HEAD FOR THAT PORT.

AYE-AYE, SIR!


I WOULD LIKE TO MEET ITS DESIGNER!
A PRIMITIVE VESSEL ... YET THERE ARE CERTAIN ASPECTS OF IT THAT SUGGEST TECHNOLOGY AT LEAST EQUAL TO OUR OWN, BROTHER!


AH, TRACTOR BEAM! THAT'S VERY THOUGHTFUL OF THEM!

MY APOLOGIES, LORD WOTAN, BUT FREYA HAS TAKE THE APE AND LEFT VALHALLA ...

WHY DO YOU DISTURB MY REST, FRICKA?

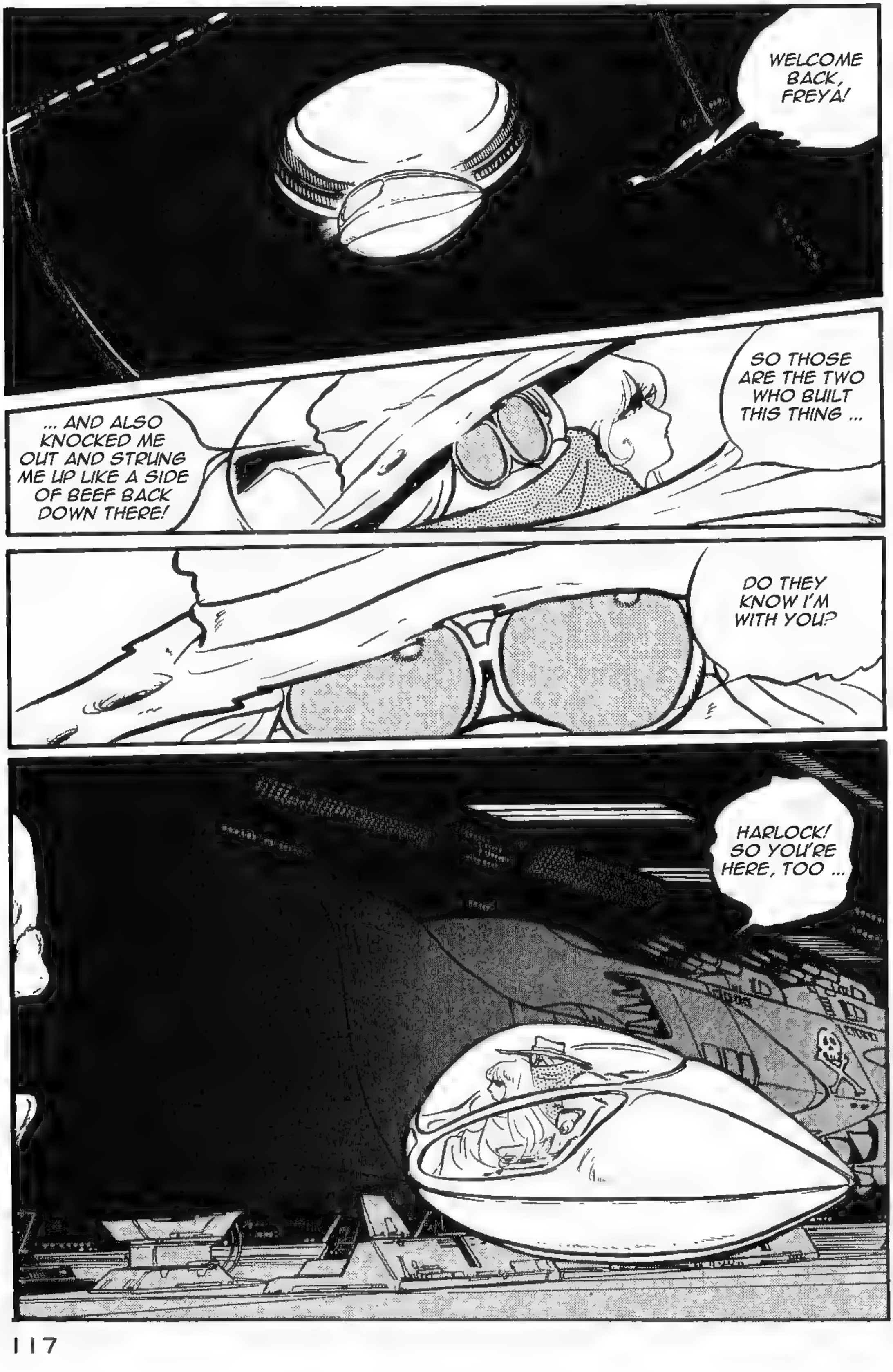
YES ... I SEE ... I ... I AM SO TIRED ... THIS FLOWING OF TIME ... MY AGE HAS CAUGHT UP WITH ME ...

... LET THEM GO ...

... I FEAR ALBERICH MORE ...

SHE WILL TAKE HIM BACK TO THE OTHERS ... THEY ARE WITH THE GIANTS INSIDE THE FORTRESS ...

YOU MEAN THEY LET US GO? JUST LIKE THAT? THIS IS TOO EASY!


WELCOME BACK, FREYA!
SO THOSE ARE THE TWO WHO BUILT THIS THING ...
... AND ALSO KNOCKED ME OUT AND STRUNG ME UP LIKE A SIDE OF BEEF BACK DOWN THERE!
DO THEY KNOW I'M WITH YOU?
HARLOCK! SO YOU'RE HERE, TOO ...

I DON'T HAVE A FREAKIN' CLUE ....

YES, OLD FRIEND! I'M HERE, AND SO ARE THE OTHERS. WHAT'S GOING ON?

COME WITH ME. THE GIANTS ARE THIS WAY

FREYA, DO YOU KNOW WHY ALL OF US HAVE BEEN BROUGHT HERE?

THIS IS ODD ... THIS SPACE FORTRESS IS NOTHING BUT AN EMPTY SHELL!!

OH, BUT THERE IS A REASON FOR THAT! THE MEISTER BROTHERS ARE MASTERS OF THEIR ART, TOCHRIO, AND THIS DESIGN SUITS THEIR PURPOSE!!

ALBERICH'S FLEET HAS JUST ENTERED ORBIT, MY LORD WOTAN.

WHAT ARE YOU SAYING, WOTAN? ARE YOU ACTUALLY GIVING THAT DWARF SOME CREDIT?!?!

I MUST ADMIT, IT'S QUITE AN IMPRESSIVE SIGHT ....

BE SILENT!! MUST YOU ALWAYS COMMENT?!

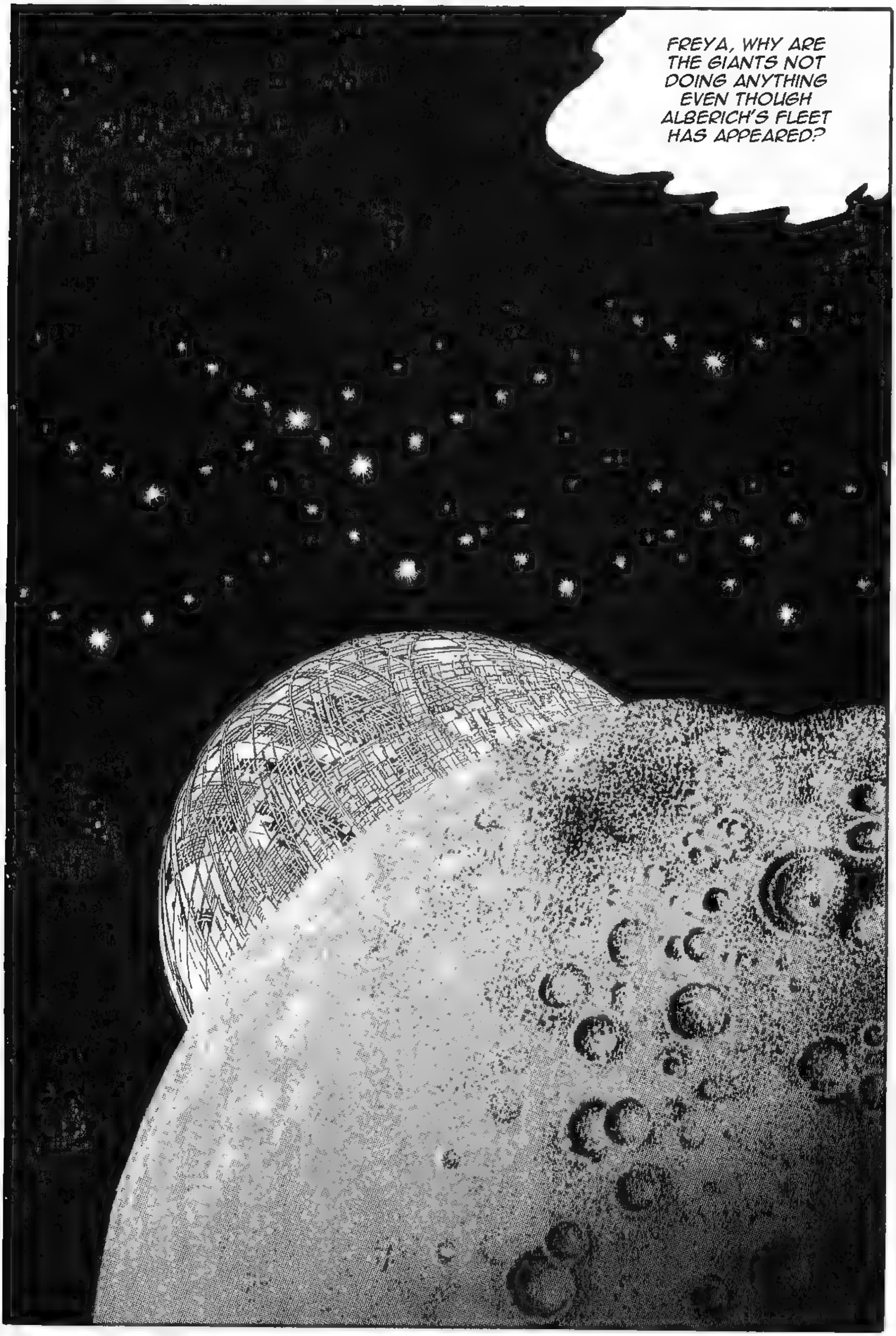
THESE LIFTS ARE A LOT FASTER THAN WHAT I'M USED TO!

AHHH!!

LET US GO TO THE CORE, AND YOU CAN SEE FOR YOURSELF.

STILL, I LIKE THE OVERALL DESIGN. GIVES ME A FEW IDEAS ...

WHOAA!!!


FREYA, WHY ARE THE GIANTS NOT DOING ANYTHING EVEN THOUGH ALBERICH'S FLEET HAS APPEARED?

BEFORE WE ARRIVE, TELL ME SOMETHING.

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THOSE WE CALL "THE GODS?"

NOT MUCH. THEY MIGHT VERY WELL BE THE OLDEST INTELLIGENT RACE IN ALL OF CREATION, BUT THEY DON'T SEEM ALL THAT DIFFERENT FROM US. AT LEAST, THEY DON'T ACT ANY DIFFERENT.

DOES THAT ANSWER YOUR QUESTION, FREYA?

THE ANSWER TO YOUR QUESTION LIES IN THE HEART OF THIS FORTRESS.

YES ... THANK YOU. WE ARE NOW ARRIVING AT THE FORTRESS CORE.

ABOUT TIME.

WHAT IS THIS STUFF. IT LOOKS LIKE THICK SMOKE OR FOG, AND YET IT'S GOT A FUNNY ODOR. IT SMELLS LIKE ... LIKE ...

IT IS THE BLOOD OF A SPACE DRAGON.

YES. IT IS THE ONLY THING THAT CAN MATCH THE POWER OF THE RING.

THE BLOOD OF A SPACE DRAGON?!

I THINK I SEE ...

DID YOU THINK THE FORTRESS WAS JUST LIFELESS METAL?

IT'S THE DRAGON BLOOD THAT POWERS THE FORTRESS!

YOU ARE WRONG, TOCHIRO ...

THE DRAGON BLOOD IS THE **TRUE** POWER WITHIN THE THE FORTRESS. IT ONLY SERVES AS A CONTAINER.

I DON'T LIKE THIS! NOT ONE PEEP FROM THE FORTRESS! AND THE BROTHERS HAVE UP THERE BOTH MIIME AND FREYA, AS WELL AS THAT PACK OF MONKEYS!!

IT IS DESIGNED TO CAPTURE ALBERICH, AND TO CONTAIN THE RING WITHIN THIS SEA OF BLOOD ....

ALBERICH'S FLEET IS HOLDING BACK ... HE DOES NOT KNOW WHAT TO MAKE OF MY FORTRESS.

IF HE HOLDS BACK, HOW ARE YOU GOING TO DRAW HIM INSIDE?!

PERHAPS ... PERHAPS WE SHOULD ATTACK ALBERICH FIRST. DRAW HIM OUT. MAKE HIM COME TO US.

THIS IS A STALEMATE, AND I DON'T LIKE STALEMATES! IN THE MEANTIME, THOSE TWO GIANTS ARE UP TO SOMETHING ...

HOW DARE HE CHALLENGE MY RIGHT AS LORD OF CREATION-- AND RIGHT AT THE DOORS OF VALHALLA ITSELF! DOES HE NOT KNOW THAT I AM READY FOR HIM? JUST AS I WAS LAST TIME?!

NO. WE WILL WAIT. AS LONG AS ALBERICH HAS THE RING, ANY SUCH ATTACK WOULD BE A WASTED EFFORT.

THAT IS ALBERICH'S FUTILE EFFORT TO DESTROY THIS FORTRESS. THE DRAGON BLOOD DRAWS HIS DESTRUCTIVE ENERGIES INSIDE AND DISPERSES THEM

WHAT'S WITH THE FIREWORKS SHOW?

ALBERICH? THEN HIS FLEET HAS MADE IT TO VALHALLA!

ALBERICH TURNS BACK! HIS FIRST ATTACK HAS FAILED!!

I WONDER WHEN HE'S GOING TO TRY THE RING —



The Rhinegold

Ring 13 – Departures


THIS IS THE HEART OF THE FORTRESS. NO HARM CAN REACH US HERE.

OH, NO ... THERE ARE THE GIANTS! HOLD MY HAND ... I'M FEELING SICK ....

GIANTS? THEY DON'T LOOK THAT BIG TO ME ...

HMMM ... YOU KNOW, THIS LOOKS A LOT LIKE THE INSIDE OF A RIFLED WEAPON BARREL ...

THEN AGAIN ...

WHAT?!!

THE FORTRESS IS LEAVING VALHALLA!!

WHAT IMPERTIENCE! THAT FORTRESS WAS BUILT AS A DEFENSE FOR VALHALLA!! AND NOW THEY STEAL IT FROM US?!!

IT'S LEAVING! IT'S ALREADY BROKEN ORBIT AND IS MOVING AWAY FROM US!!!

DON'T YOU THINK I WOULD IF I COULD WOMAN?!?!

CAN'T YOU STOP IT?!

THEY MUST BE CHASING AFTER ALBERICH AND HIS FLEET. BUT WHY?

WELL ... AT LEAST THE SKIES ABOVE VALHALLA ARE CLEAR AGAIN.

LET THEM BE!

PERHAPS WE SHOULD GO AFTER THEM.

AS YOU WILL, MY LORD.

PERHAPS PEACE WILL ONCE AGAIN RETURN TO OUR BELOVED VALHALLA. PERHAPS WE CAN STILL SAVE WHAT IS LEFT OF THE PARADISE WE ONCE PLANNED ...

A PARADISE MEANT FOR ALL ETERNITY.


VALHALLA ... AN ARTIFICIAL WORLD AT THE CENTER OF ALL CREATION -- THAT IS, ONLY HALF A WORLD ... ONLY HALF OF WHAT IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN. BOTH OUR ALLIES AND OUR CHILDREN HAVE REBELLED AGAINST US ...
... AND EVEN THE GODS LACK THE MEANS TO RESTORE IT AS IT WAS MEANT TO BE ....

WHY DID THE GIANTS LEAVE WITHOUT NOTIFYING US? AND WHY DID THEY TAKE MIIME, FREYA, AND THE HUMAN APES WITH THEM?

AND WHAT ABOUT ALBERICH? HE HAS NOT YET BEEN VANQUISHED, WOTAN!

DO NOT FORGET THE CLOAKING SYSTEM HE USED BEFORE.

WHERE IS HE LURKING?

HE HAS HAD 650 EONS TO IMPROVE ON IT ...

THAT IS HOW HE AND HIS SISTER MIIME ESCAPED US THE FIRST TIME.

SO THEY HIDE ... AND LICK THEIR WOUNDS.

HE HAS PROBABLY INSTALLED IMPROVED VERSIONS OF THAT DEVICE ON EVERY ONE OF THE SHIPS IN HIS FLEET.

EVEN SO ... I WOULD FEEL BETTER IF THE FORTRESS WERE STILL ABOVE OUR HEADS. IF HE SHOULD COME BACK WHILE IT IS AWAY ...!

THIS FORTRESS CONTAINS THE BLOOD OF A SPACE DRAGON? THAT'S HOW YOU'RE GOING TO STOP HIM?!

THE BLOOD OF A SPACE DRAGON?!

EXACTLY! THE MAIN DRAWBACK IS THAT THIS BLOOD IS DEFENSIVE IN NATURE, NOT OFFENSIVE. IT PROVIDES PERFECT PROTECTION AGAINST ANY ATTACK -- EVEN WHEN DRIVEN BY THE POWER OF THE RHINEGOLD! SO IT WAS THE LAST TIME A RING WAS FORGED! OUR PROBLEM WAS TO MAKE IT INTO AN OFFENSIVE WEAPON!

WHETHER IT BE A KNIFE, OR A SWORD, OR A PISTOL, OR A GRAVITY SABER ... A STARSHIP SHOCK CANNON OR MISSILE DEFENSE SYSTEM ... EVEN ON THIS SCALE, WITH THE DRAGON BLOOD AND THE RHINEGOLD ...

IT IS THE AGE-OLD PROBLEM OF WEAPONS SYSTEMS, IS IT NOT?

... YOU BUILD A BETTER ONE.

... IF YOUR ENEMY COMES TO YOU WITH THE BIGGEST, MOST POWERFUL, MOST BAD-ASS WEAPON IN EXISTENCE ...

FREYA!!

MIIME!!

AND SO, THE TWIN SISTERS ARE REUNITED.

... AND MIIME, THE ELDER SISTER, WHO WAS EXILED ALONG WITH THE REST OF HER PEOPLE, THE NIBELUNGEN, AND NOW LIVES BEYOND VALHALLA.

THEY ARE BOTH SO BEAUTIFUL ....

AH, SO IT IS TRUE THEN! FREYA, THE YOUNGER SISTER, WHO LIVES AMONG THE GODS AND IS COUNTED AMONG THOSE THAT GOVERN FROM VALHALLA ...

YEAH ... ABOUT THAT ... IT'S MY UNDERSTANDING THAT YOU WANT MIIME NOW, NOT FREYA.

OH, NO. OUR HEARTS STILL BELONG TO FREYA. WE HAVE LOVED HER EVER SINCE THE FIRST DAY WE SAW HER IN VALHALLA, CONTROLLING THE FLOW OF TIME.

TOCHIRO!! YOU'RE SAFE!

BEEN OFF HAVING ADVENTURES ON YOUR OWN, NO DOUBT?

... BUT ALBERICH HAS COMPLETELY DESTROYED THE ONE ON PLANET RHINE. MIIME WAS TRYING TO RETUNE THE ORGAN TO PLAY ALONE ...

I ONLY WRECKED THE PIPES, THOUGH, SO IT WOULD LET HER BACK OUT. IT SHOULDN'T BE DIFFICULT TO REPAIR ...

MIIME WAS TRYING TO REPAIR THE ORGAN, BUT THEN YOU TWO CAME ALONG AND SCREWED EVERYTHING UP ... WHICH MEANT I HAD TO WRECK THE ORGAN IN ORDER TO GET HER OUT OF THERE.

... AND SINCE MIIME HAS RETUNED THE ORGAN TO PLAY WITHOUT ITS LOST MATE ON THE PLANET RHINE, THERE WILL BE NO NEED TO SEND A REPLACEMENT. YOUR UNIVERSE WILL STILL BE CONNECTED TO VALHALLA, BUT IT WILL NO LONGER BE CONTROLLED BY IT. TIME WILL FLOW FREELY THERE ... BUT WILL STOP AGAIN HERE.

THANK YOU FOR BEIN SO CONSIDERATE IN SUCH A DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCE. AS YOU SAID, IT WILL NOT BE DIFFICULT TO REPAIR THE ORGAN ...

WOTAN WILL NOT APPROVE, OF COURSE ... BUT HE IS NO LONGER IN A POSITION TO DEBATE THIS MATTER. HE CAN BE CONVINCED TO LET SOME THINGS GO ... AS WE FOUND OUT OURSELVES.

PERHAPS THE TIME HAS COME FOR YOU AND YOUR KIND, THE YOUNGEST RACE, TO LET GO OF THE GUIDING HAND OF THE GODS AND GO YOUR OWN WAY.

THE GODS ARE THE ELDEST OF ALL RACES IN ALL OF THE RINGS OF TIME. THEY WERE MUCH LIKE YOU IN THEIR EARLY DAYS ... IN MANY WAYS ...

... BUT NOW THEY ARE OLD AND FRAIL, AND THEIR GRIP ON THEIR GODHOOD CRUMBLES. WE DID NOT BUILD THIS FORTRESS FOR THEM ... BUT OUT OF OUR DEEP DESIRE FOR FREYA.

PERHAPS NOW IS THE TIME TO BEG PARDON AND PERHAPS FORGIVENESS FROM FREYA, WHOM WE SO WRONGED BELOW ...

... BUT PLEASE! HEAR US OUT BEFORE YOU JUDGE US!

THERE IS NONE LIKE FREYA AMONG OUR KIND. HER BEAUTY AND GRACE HAVE NO RIVAL, SAVE FOR HER SISTER MIIME.

WE ARE OF TWO DIFFERENT WORLDS ... BUT WE SO DESIRED WHAT WE KNEW WE COULD NOT HAVE ...

IT IS A DOUBLE BURDEN WE MUST BEAR ... THE SHAME OF WHAT WE DID TO FREYA, WHOM WE LOVE ABOVE ALL ELSE ... AND WHAT WE MIGHT HAVE DONE, HAD SHE DIED BY OUR HANDS! CAN YOU ... WOULD YOU ... POSSIBLY ... FORGIVE US?

... AND HAD THAT HAPPENED, THEN WHO WOULD HAVE TAKEN HER PLACE AT THE ORGAN? TIME WOULD HAVE SPUN OUT OF CONTROL, ALL BECAUSE OF OUR LUST!

IT WAS ONLY AFTER THAT WE REALIZED HOW CRUEL WE WERE TO HER! SHE MIGHT HAVE DIED BY OUR HANDS ...

I AM TADASHI DAIBA. I AM THE ONE WHO REFORGED THE RING.

WHO IS THIS?

SO ... YOU ARE THE MAKER ...

MOST CERTAINLY!

BUT THEY ARE NOT. TELL ME -- GIVEN THE CHANCE, WOULD YOU UNMAKE THE RING?

HEY, NOW!

IF THE GODS WERE STANDING HERE NOW, THEY WOULD STRIKE YOU DOWN FOR WHAT YOU DID.

... BUT FIRST, WE'VE GOT TO GET IT BACK FROM ALBERICH.

THE SAME EQUIPMENT IN MY FAHTER'S LAB THAT I USED TO MAKE THE RING CAN ALSO UNMAKE IT ...

AND IF WE LEAVE HERE, HE CAN KILL US!!

BUT HE WEARS THE RING ON HIS FINGER!!

NO GOOD. THE DRAGON'S BLOOD IS NOW ACTIVE. IT CAN'T DISTINGUISH BETWEEN FRIEND OR FOE. IT'LL ATTACK US AS READILY AS IT WILL ATTACK ALBERICH.

MAYBE THE ARCADIA ....

WHY DIDN'T YOU TWO TELL US BEFORE WE CAME INSIDE?!?!

YOU MEAN WE'RE STUCK HERE?!

BUT YOU CANNOT! IT IS IMPERVIOUS TO ATTACK!!

DAMNIT!! WE GOTTA FIGURE OUT A WAY TO GET PAST THAT DRAGON'S BLOOD!!

WERE WE GOING TO BAIT WOT AN'S TRAP, OR SOMETHING?!!

THEN WHY THE HELL DID YOU HAVE ALL OF US COME HERE?!!

HE IS QUITE LOUD, FOR SOMEONE SO SMALL.

YOU ARE SO THICK, FOR SOMEONE SO SMART!

AI-YI-YI!!

THAT I CAN DO ... THERE IT IS. IT HAS GATHERED NEAR THE TOP OF THE CENTRAL CORE ELEVATOR SHAFTS.

WE'D BETTER TRY ANOTHER APPROACH. CAN YOU SHOW ME WHAT THE DRAGON'S BLOOD IS DOING RIGHT NOW?

IT HAS GROWN MORE POWERFUL THAN WE ANTICIPATED. WE MAY HAVE TROUBLE KEEPING IT CONTAINED.

THERE SURE IS A LOT OF IT IN THERE.

WAIT -- WHAT'S THAT ALARM?

BRZZZ

YOU TELL 'EM!

IF YOU WILL GIVE UP THE RING, THEN WE WILL HELP YOU.

... NO ... IT IS MINE! ... THE RING ... IS MINE! ...

ALBERICH ... GIVE UP THE RING.

BUT ... BUT IT WILL ATTACK YOU, TOO!

WOULDN'T BE THE FIRST TIME MY CREW'S HAD TO FIGHT INHUMAN MONSTERS.

WE'RE WITH YOU ALL THE WAY, MIIME!

YOU CAN COUNT ON US!

OPEN THE HATCH. LET'S GO GET HIM.

MIIME!

WAIT!! I ... I WILL GIVE UP THE RING ...

PLEASE! HELP ME! HURRY ... !!

I HAVE NO DESIRE TO RETURN. MY GUESS IS THAT YOU DO NOT, EITHER.

VALHALLA IS CALLING. THEY WANT US TO RETURN.

THESE HUMANS DO NOT MAKE SENSE. I SEE NO LOGIC IN THEIR ACTION!

WATCH OUT FOR THE DRAGON'S BLOOD!

MIIME, YOU GO AFTER THE RING. WE'LL TRY TO DISTRACT THAT STUFF FOR YOU.

FOR A LONG TIME, THE GODS HAVE TAKEN ADVANTAGE OF SUCH AS US ...

THEY ARE SELFISH, AND GREEDY, AND THINK OF NOTHING BUT SATISFYING THEMSELVES. IT WAS NOT SO IN THE BEGINNING, BUT IT IS NOW.

THEY ARE SO DISSOLUTE THAT THEY ARE WILLING TO LIVE ON HALF A WORLD!

THAT'S ...

THAT'S THE DRAGON BLOOD! IT'S ALIVE SOMEHOW!!

EYES AND EARS, MEN.

"GULP!"

HOLY SHIT!!

STAY IN VISUAL CONTACT AT ALL TIMES!

SENSORS WILL BE USELESS IN THIS MUCK.

DO YOU SMELL IT?!

YEAH ... LIKE THE MUSK OF A MAD BEAR, BUT A LOT STRONGER ... A WHOLE LOT.

MIIME!! WATCH OUT!!!

THIS FOE IS BEYOND YOU, HARLOCK! IT IS NEITHER ANIMAL NOR MACHINE ...

... BUT REPULSION EMBODIED! THIS FEEDS OFF OF THE NEGATIVE EMOTIONS OF ITS FOES! IT IS A BEAST OF THE MIND!!

HEY, LOOK OVER THERE! ALBERICH!!

SURRENDER THE RING, ALBERICH!! NOW!!!

"SOB"

YOU HAVE MORE HATRED AND EVIL WITHIN YOU THAN ALL OF US COMBINED! IF YOU DON'T GIVE UP THE RING, THE DRAGON'S BLOOD WILL MELT YOU DOWN!!!

THANK YOU.

HERE.

HE IS YOURS NOW.

DON'T LEAVE ME, MIIME!! I CAN FEEL THE DRAGON TEARING AT ME!! HELP!!!

I HAVE THE RING ....

MIIME!!

MIIME!! WHERE ARE YOU GOING?!

THE RING.

WE MUST REFUSE!!

GIVE ME THE KEY TO THE SPECIAL CHAMBER YOU BUILT FOR FREYA.

FASOLT ... FAFNER ...

ONE THING ONLY ....

HOW CAN I CHANGE YOUR MIND?

WE WANT FREYA TO SAY THAT SHE LIKES US.

WE DO NOT ASK FOR HER LOVE. WE KNOW BETTER, BECAUSE OF WHAT WE DID TO HER. BUT JUST ONCE ... FROM HER OWN LIPS ...

NO ...

AT A TIME LIKE THIS?!

WE KNOW THAT. WE KNOW OURS IS A DESIRE THAT CAN NEVER BE ...

IT'S NOT JUST WHAT YOU DID ... YOU'RE TOO DIFFERENT!

SHE DOES NOT HAVE TO MEAN IT, ONLY SAY IT! WE KNOW WE ARE TOO UGLY AND CRUDE FOR HER!!

... BUT JUST ONCE, BEFORE WE DIE ... FROM HER OWN SWEET LIPS ... IS IT TOO MUCH TO ASK?

NO, BROTHER! THIS ONE CHANCE IS ALL WE SHALL EVER HAVE!! WE CAN NEVER MAKE HER LOVE US!! ALL WE CAN HOPE FOR IS HER PITY, IF SHE WILL GIVE IT ... AND THAT IS ALL SHE CAN EVER GIVE THE LIKES OF US ... IT IS ENOUGH.

PERHAPS IT IS TOO MUCH TO ASK OF HER.

FAFNIR ...!

THE GREATEST WRONG THAT CAN EVER BE DONE TO A WOMAN HAS BEEN DONE TO ME BY THESE TWO ...

FREYA? WILL YOU PITY THEM?

... AND YET, NOW I UNDERSTAND THEIR HEARTS. THEY KNEW NO OTHER WAY TO EXPRESS THEMSELVES. WE ARE TOO DIFFERENT.

IT IS ALL I CAN EVER DO.

I ... I PITY YOU, FASOLT. I ALSO PITY YOU, FAFNIR.

OH ...!

* SNIF *

HERE IS THE KEY.

THANK YOU, FREYA.

NO _ IT'S DISSOLVING!

OOF!

I WAS HOPING YOU HAD A PLAN

I'M FLESH OUT

HELP!! IT'S GOT ME!!!

HEY!

IT'S LEAVING!

WHAT DO WE DO NOW, HARLOCK?

AND NOT A MOMENT TOO SOON FOR ME!

WELL IF WE DON'T DO SOMETHING SOON, IT'S GOING TO GOBBLE UP ALBERICH AND THEN COME AFTER US AS AFTER-DINNER SNACKS!

IT'S GONE ...

... THE COSMIC ORGAN! YOU HAD ANOTHER ONE!!

IT'S ...

WHEN WE FIRST PLANNED TO TAKE FREYA, AND MAKE HER LIVE WITH US, WE MADE FOR HER ANOTHER ONE. IT IS AN EXACT DUPLICATE OF THE ONE THAT NOW SITS IN RUINS IN THE GARDENS OF VALHALLA ... AND LIKE IT, THIS ONE IS KEYED TO THE MASTER RING OF TIME ...

... WHERE IT WILL SOON DISSAPATE AND DIE.

WE HAVE DUMPED THE DRAGON'S BLOOD INTO SPACE ...

MIIME HAS TUNED IT FOR US, AND WE NOW GIVE IT TO FREYA AS A PARTING GIFT.

DAIBA?!!

IT'S YOU!!

SO THAT'S WHAT YOU REALLY LOOK LIKE UNDER THE MASK!

... BY SHOOTING ME IN THE BACK!!

YOU TRIED TO KILL ME IN MY OWN FACTORY ...

C'MON, KID! HE'S REALLY TOO PATHETIC TO BE SHOT WITH A WARRIOR'S GUN!

PLEASE ... HAVE MERCY!

... AND I HAD NOT BETTER SEE ONE HINT OF YOU ON EARTH ...

AS SOON AS I GO BACK TO MY OWN UNIVERSE, I'M GOING TO MELT THIS RING DOWN AND UNFOLD IT BACK INTO ITS ORIGNAL FORM ...

THAT'S THE LEAST OF MY WORRIES, DAIBA! I'VE LOST BOTH THE RING AND MY FLEET! HOW CAN I RETURN TO NIBELHEIM AND FACE MY PEOPLE?! I PROMISED THEM GODHOOD, AND I'M RETURNING EMPTY-HANDED! DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHAT THEY'RE GOING TO DO WITH ME?!?

... OR I'M GONNA BLOW YOUR FREAKIN' HEAD OFF!!!

AS FOR ME ... THE ARCADIA IS MY HOME ...

IS ... IS IT GONE?

YES.

... AND VALHALLA IS MY SISTER'S ...

IT'S TIME TO SEND FREYA HOME. FASOLT, FAFNER -- IF YOU WILL?

... SEEING TO IT THAT THE RINGS OF TIME RUN IN THEIR PROPER PLACES. THE VOICE OF HER ORGAN, AND THE SWEET MELODY OF HER MUSIC WILL EVER BE CLOSE, EVEN THOUGH WE MAY NOT HEAR IT AGAIN.

FREYA WILL AGAIN RESUME HER DUTY AS THE PLAYER OF THE COSMIC ORGAN ...

SHE WILL ALSO MAKE SURE THAT THE PORTAL WILL TAKE US BACK TO OUR OWN RING OF TIME.

I LIKE THE SOUND OF THAT!

I HEAR THE SOUND OF FREYA'S MUSIC ... AND IT'S GETTING CLOSER TO VALHALLA!

THE FLOW OF TIME HAS STOPPED AGAIN IN VALHALLA.

IT IS A SMALL OBJECT, RAPIDLY MOVING IN OUR DIRECTION.

SOMETHING HAS LEFT THE FORTRESS.

IT IS FREYA! AND SHE COMES WITH A NEW ORGAN! QUICK!! LET HER IN!!!

AS WE DID IN THE OLD DAYS ....

I BELIEVE THEY DO NOT INTEND TO EVER RETURN. HOW WILL WE DEFEND VALHALLA WITHOUT THE FORTRESS?

THE MEISTER BROTHERS ARE LEAVING VALHALLA, AND TAKING THE HUMANS WITH THEM THROUGH THE DIMENSIONAL PORTAL.

... AND PEACE HAS AT LAST RETURNED TO VALHALLA!

THE RING IS GONE, AND SO IS ALBERICH ...

YOU!!! WHAT DO YOU WANT? WHY MUST YOU ABORT OUR CELEBRATION!

NOT YET.

... BUT ITS BRIEF SLIPPAGE OPENED PATHWAYS ACROSS THE RINGS. MANY DEMONS AND OTHER HORRORS HAVE MADE THE CROSSINGS ...

THE RINGS OF TIME RUN SMOOTHLY AGAIN ...

THIS IS BUT A LULL IN THE STORM, WOTAN. IT HAS NOT PASSED YOU BY, AND WILL COME AGAIN WITH EVEN GREATER STRENGTH THAN BEFORE.

I AM ERDA, THE DOOMSAYER OF THE GODS. I HAVE SPOKEN.

... AND NOW BEASTS THAT SHOULD NEVER HAVE BEEN SET FREE RUN AMOK! WHO CAN KNOW WHAT NEW DANGERS ARE OUT THERE?

THE ARCADIA WILL BE THERE TO MEET THEM, SHOULD ANY SHOW UP HERE.

... AND YOU SAY ALL SORTS OF DEMONS AND MONSTERS FROM OTHER PLANES OF EXISTENCE WERE LOOSED, MIIME? THAT'S NOT EXACTLY THE KIND OF NEWS TO GET WHEN RETURNING HOME.

I LEARNED SO MUCH DURING THIS TRIP THAT I'M GOING TO START OVERHAULING THE ARCADIA AS SOON AS I CAN!

AFTER THAT, WHY DON'T WE GET KEI AND THE OTHERS, AND TAKE OFF ON A GRAND ADVENTURE?

I'LL MAKE IT TWICE AS POWERFUL AS BEFORE!

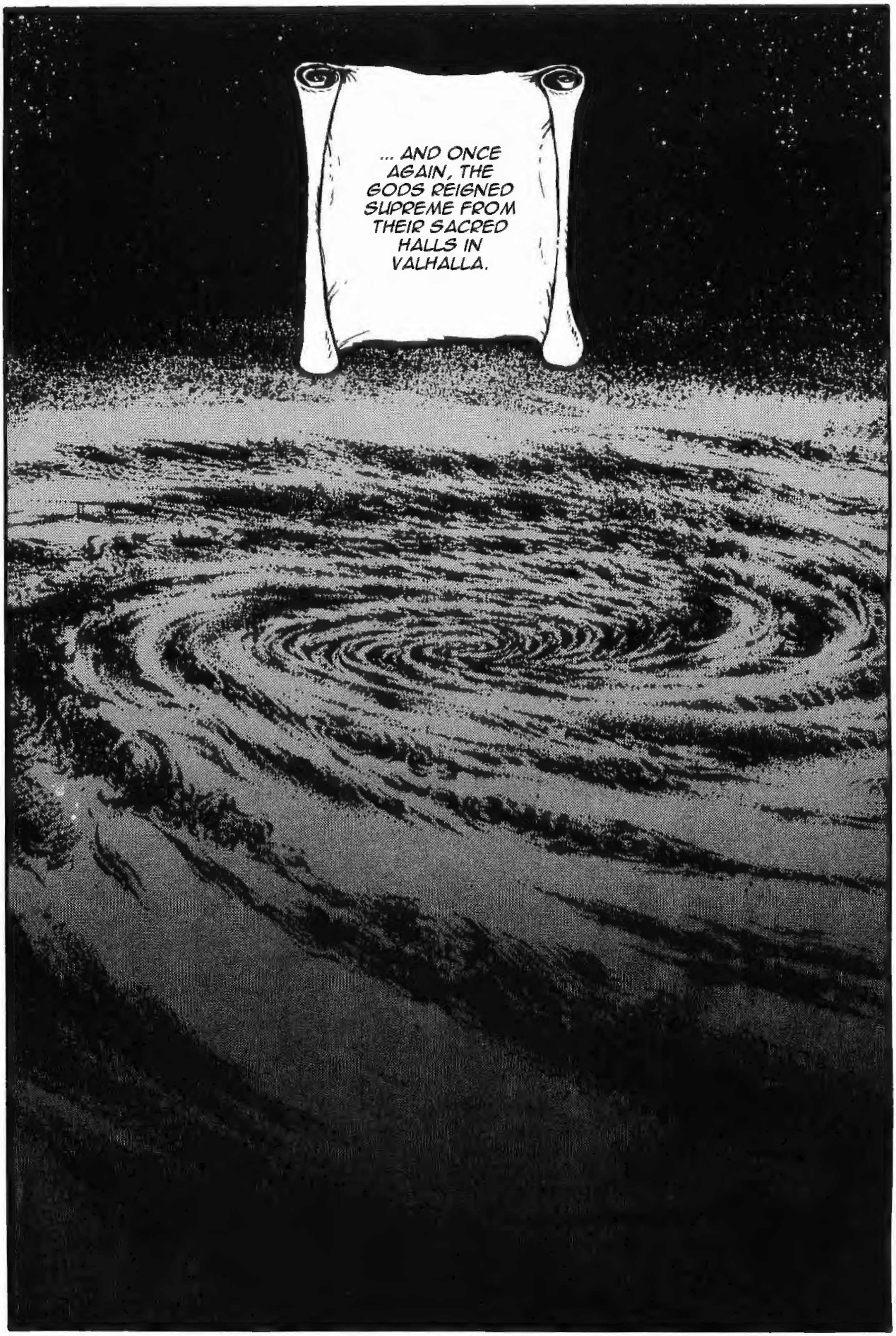
I'VE GOT A RING TO UNMAKE AND RETURN TO THE PLANET RHINE, ONCE IT REAPPEARS. RIGHT, MIIME?

SORRY, BUT I'LL HAVE TO TAKE A RAIN CHECK.

THIS IS ONLY THE BEGINNING, PEOPLE ...

THE UNIVERSE WILL NEVER BE THE SAME!!

I UNDERSTAND, TADASHI. WE'LL BE IN TOUCH ... AND TAKE CARE OF HIM, MIIME, UNTIL YOU CAN RETURN TO US.


... AND ONCE AGAIN, THE GODS REIGNED SUPREME FROM THEIR SACRED HALLS IN VALHALLA.



The Rhinegold

Der Ring des Nibelungen: Das Rhiengold was first published as a serial manga in *Chukosa* magazine from 10/10/1990 to 11/25/1992, and as a two-volume book by Shinchosa Publishing in January 1992.

This English version was adapted by Richard Mandel from the 2002 French language edition published by Kana Press.

made by fans for fans
no infringement intended or implied

